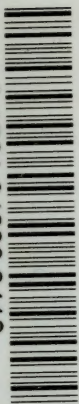


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TENNYSON
SELECT POEMS

CONTAINING THE
SELECTIONS PRESCRIBED FOR THE DEPARTMENTAL
EXAMINATIONS,

1907.

EDITED WITH
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.

BY
W. J. ALEXANDER, PH.D.,
Professor of English in University College, Toronto.

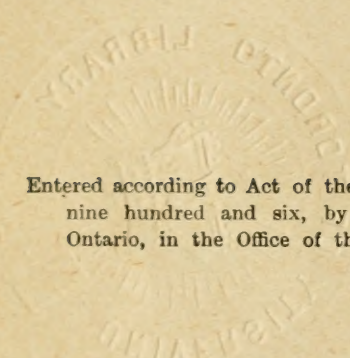
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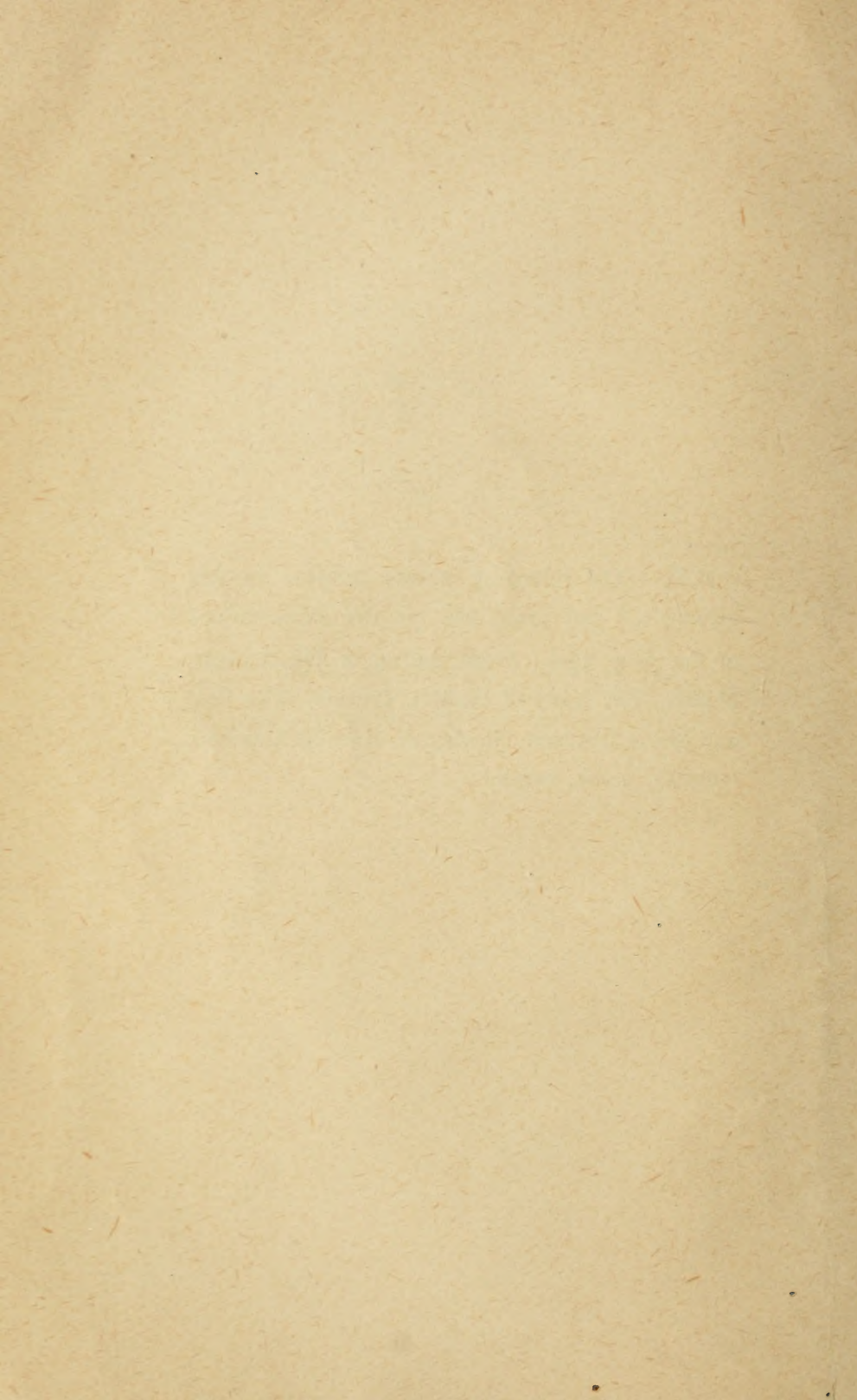
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1906



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N. B. — The following poems included in this volume are not prescribed for the examinations of the year 1907 : Recollections of the Arabian Nights, The Lady of Shalott, Oenone, The Epic and Morte D'Arthur, St. Agnes' Eve, Sir Galahad, "Break, break, break."



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INTRODUCTION.

THE STUDY OF LITERATURE.

I.

Peculiarities of the Study of Literature.

Literature in its Widest Sense.—Literature in its widest sense is thought recorded in language. It includes, therefore, all written thought,—not only poems, essays, novels, but also scientific treatises, letters, inscriptions. Euclid's *Elements*, Mill's *Logic*, Cowper's correspondence with his friends (whose publication the writer never contemplated), fall within the province of literature as well as Shakespeare's dramas and Tennyson's poems. Literature also includes thought which is not written down but registered in some fixed form of words upon the memories of men : such was the case originally with ballads and popular songs—with the poems ascribed to Homer, for example—which were registered not in written characters but in the tablets of the brain, and were transmitted by word of mouth.

The Goal of Literary Study.—The immense mass of material included under the definition just given, is the material for literary study, and the aim of the study is simply to understand this record. Setting out from the basis of the language employed, it is the work of the student of literature to attain to the state of mind which the writer intended to embody. The writer had certain thoughts, feelings, definite or vague sensations, to which he desired to give utterance ; he sought for the proper vocabulary, sentence forms, imagery, etc., to afford adequate expression to these mental conditions, and having found them recorded them by writing or by other means. The

literary student reverses the process ; he takes the recorded language, and by the use of reason, imagination and so forth, interprets this record and sets up within himself, as nearly as may be, the original state of mind of the author.

Difference between the Study of Literature, and the Study of Books for other than Literary Purposes.—If literature includes all sorts of books, as our definition indicates,—even such books as Euclid's *Elements* and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*—it may be asked, in what respect, when these books are our material, does the study of literature differ from the study of mathematics, or of history. It differs by its aim or point of view, and by its range. The whole aim of the student of literature is to understand with the utmost completeness what the author is expressing by his language ; on the other hand, for the student of the special department to which the book under consideration belongs, such understanding is only preliminary to a further end, viz., the determination of what are the *facts*, and to what conclusions they lead. It would not be of much moment to the student of history that he should misinterpret, or inadequately interpret, Gibbon's meaning, provided he arrived at the truth in regard to the decline of Rome ; whereas to the student of literature, Gibbon's ideas, feelings, etc., are the main objects, and the Roman Empire is not at all an immediate matter of concern. A second point of difference is, that students in other departments continually go outside of books—the recorded thoughts of men—and study facts existing in material objects and natural phenomena. This is particularly the case in science, where the student continually comes face to face with facts without the intervention of another mind ; but the student of literature never investigates, as his subject, anything which has not first passed through the mind of another, and taken form and shape there. The facts with regard to the way in which bodies fall to the earth will never come before him or concern him, as a student of literature, until some other mind has noted and recorded them ; and, even then, he does not enquire what is the truth with regard to falling bodies, but what a particular writer has said about them.

“Colour” in Literature.—Facts are sometimes much modified and *coloured* (as one may say) in this passage through another mind which invariably takes place before they come to be considered by the literary student. The axioms of Euclid represent the bare thought ; these truths have not taken on any particular modification or colour from the circumstance that it is a certain man, Euclid, who has given them expression ; any other person who grasped them clearly, would express them in much the same way. Such an assertion cannot be made of Carlyle’s *History of the French Revolution*, or Green’s *History of England* ; other authors than these might embody the same material, and yet give a wholly different impression to the reader. The matter might have taken a different *colour* from the mind of the writer. Now as the student of history is in search of the truth,—the substantial facts—he disregards in as far as possible these modifications which are derived from the mind of the author. But, on the other hand, to the student of literature, whose object is not to know the facts, but the exact mental condition of the writer, it is of prime importance to know not merely the assertions made, but the feelings with which they are regarded, in as far as these are embodied in the language. It is this colour, this human element, that interests him most of all.

Two Kinds of Interpretation in Literature.—In the first place, then, in interpretation, the student of literature has to get at the substantial meaning which the work conveys,—and here he is on common ground with the specialist in the department to which the book belongs,—history, or science, or whatever that department may be. But, in the second place, there may be, beyond this substantial meaning, modifications and colouring imparted by the writer ; these, too, the student of literature must understand ; and here he parts company with the specialist, who gives little heed to such matters. The first stage of interpretation is usually either very simple, or, if difficult, the difficulty arises from the nature of the subject, and can therefore be overcome only by one who possesses knowledge of that particular subject, *i.e.*,

by the specialist. The second stage of interpretation is a much more subtle matter ; the difficulties which may arise in various departments are of the same general character, for they lie, not in the matter, but in the *form*,—in the manner of *expression*—and it is in this part of the work that the student of literature finds his special function.

Manner of Expression the Source of Literary Colour.—This modification or colouring is not conveyed by assertions. We are supposing for the moment that the facts—the substantial thought—are given and fixed ; yet different writers will cause a different impression as to these facts by *the way in which they put them*. The difference may be illustrated in a slightly different sphere : we can easily imagine a machine made so as successfully to articulate words when air is forced through it ; thus the operator might convey thought from his mind to ours. But the effect would be very unlike that produced by the human voice speaking in the ordinary way. In the first case, bare thought would be given ; in the second, the same thought modified, illuminated, vivified by the expression, gesture, tones of the living speaker. Now, some recorded thought, a large portion of literature in the wide sense, resembles the utterances of this machine : it conveys ideas—dry statements of facts, as we say : for example, the definitions in *Euclid* or in any other scientific work, are of this character. In these cases, when the substantial meaning of the assertion has been mastered, the work of interpretation is complete. But language may have, in the hands of a skilful writer, a wonderful power of conveying to the reader such modifications and emotional accompaniments as, in ordinary conversation, are given by tone, gesture and play of feature. These effects are not imparted by the actual statements made by the sentences ; they are not the substantial thought ; they are the modifications and accompaniments of the thought through the form and manner of the expression. Literary study, therefore, is specially concerned with manner or form ; just as literature itself consists not of a body of facts—truths transmitted through the minds of living men (as might be the case with science), but of ideas as recorded *in fixed forms of language*.

Literature in its Narrower Sense.—An English translation of the original Greek work of Euclid may serve a mathematician quite as well as the Euclid's own words. No translation of *Homer* can to the same extent suffice the student of literature. The philosophical import of Plato's writings may be represented in English; but its literary import only in a very inadequate fashion. A chapter in Gibbon's history might be reproduced in the words of another man without sacrificing anything of prime importance in the original; no one could re-write in his own language *Morte D'Arthur*, or *Crossing the Bar*, without sacrificing a great deal, or producing something of an altogether different character. The student of literature will therefore find much to engage his interest in the latter cases, and comparatively little in the former. With works made up of bare, dry, unemotional, impersonal statements, the student of literature has but little concern; with works impregnated by the characteristics of the writer, coloured by his personality and his mood, a great deal. While literature may, then, be said to include all recorded thought, the word is used more properly and frequently of recorded thought to which colour is lent from the form or character of the language employed; and these peculiarities of form or expression which serve to carry certain impressions to the mind of the reader in addition to the substantial assertions, are comprised under the name *Style*.

Style.—Style arises, then, from the nature of the thinking and recording mind. The complex atmosphere with which the literary writer surrounds his ideas is evidently the outcome of his personality—hence it has truly been said that 'The style is the man.' Every one knows that in real life, many men exercise a power through the impression that their individuality makes upon others. In many speakers, it is not so much what they say, or the language in which they say it, but a something conveyed through the actual presence of the man, that gives force. We speak of men of magnetic, or of winning, or of dominating characters. Such men have the power of bringing their personality to bear upon other men. The power of convey-

ing similar impressions through written language is the specific literary gift. Many persons who have communicated thoughts of great worth through written language, have not possessed this power in any high degree ; and in the treatment of some subjects this power, or rather the exercise of it, is not desirable. As, when a surgeon is performing a delicate operation, it is a positive advantage that his emotional nature, his sympathy, etc., should for the time be in abeyance, in order that his whole energy may be devoted to observation, judgment, the controlling of the muscles, and that the mind may be undisturbed by anything foreign to the success of the operation ; so, the scientific man, dealing with universal abstract truth, is at his best when uninfluenced by his own individual character and feelings, and when his statements of results are also free from these transitory and alien factors. But if such writing is free from the drawbacks, it also lacks the charm, of literary style. There are other writers who, consciously or unconsciously, set an impress on their work through certain peculiarities in expression, and this impress will be recognizable in all their writings, and will serve to differentiate these from the works of others. For example, by such peculiarities persons of literary culture easily determine whether a certain poem is by Tennyson, or by Browning, whether a certain essay is by Macaulay or by Carlyle. Even when a writer of genius treats of themes of widely different character, and employs literary forms far removed from one another, there are almost invariably present in all these productions certain qualities—difficult it may be to seize upon and define—which characterize them all, stamp them as the progeny of a single mind, and differentiate them from the works of all his contemporaries. These idiosyncrasies of style are something from which the person who possesses them cannot escape, provided he writes naturally ; but there is a higher power of style than this, the power of shaping language, at will, so as to arouse a desired series of feelings or impressions in the reader. So Gray was able to impose a form upon the *Elegy*, to give a character to the style, which serves to stimulate certain vague moods or impressions in keeping with the substantial thought. In his *Lines to Mr. Walpole's Cat*, the style

vision and its accompanying thoughts and feelings may, without the external stimulus, be revived in a less definite and intense form. This latter is an imaginative experience. Or an artist may conjure up in his consciousness a scene which is not a copy of any particular landscape, but which is, of course, made up of details drawn from actual experience. This is a higher exercise of imagination. Lady Macbeth in sleep smells blood upon her hand; Macbeth sees, as he thinks, the dead Banquo sitting at the feast; this is a very vivid imaginative experience, but an abnormal one, for it deceives the judgment, and is not under the control of the will. So, by imagination, not merely objects of sight, but of hearing, smelling, etc., may be evoked in the brain; and in like manner, any sort of physical feeling, or any emotional state,—fear, joy, etc. Thus, we may pass through almost all the possible experiences of actual life, though in a vaguer and less intense fashion. The power of imaginatively reviving past experiences is universal; on the other hand, the power of conceiving concrete experiences which possess a high measure of novelty, is a much rarer gift. Persons possessed of imagination in its most striking manifestations, are able to conceive novel characters, scenes, situations, events, with great vividness, and these of a highly interesting and beautiful kind. If to this power of conceiving, the person adds the power of representing his conceptions in some medium—language, colour, sound,—so that they may be easily reproduced in others, he has the qualifications of a great artist, be it poet, painter or musician. Such is the power which Shakespeare so astonishingly manifests in his plays; and no one has completed the work of understanding those plays—the work of literary interpretation—until he has, not merely grasped the series of events, the ideas expressed and so on, but has also imaginatively entered into them and lived, as it were, through them. Any one can easily comprehend the difference both in kind and in degree between the impression produced upon a comparatively illiterate person through the reading of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, and the impression produced upon the same person through seeing the same plays well enacted on the stage. In the latter case, the scenery, the personality of the actors, their rendering of their parts contribute

a very large share to the imaginative work required for understanding the text of the drama. Now, there is a difference of the same sort, and quite as great in degree, between the impression produced by the reading of *any* piece of imaginative literature,—not merely plays and novels, but such pieces as *Crossing the Bar*, “*Tears, idle tears,*” or *Ulysses*—upon a person who merely has an intellectual understanding of the piece (such as would be amply sufficient in a passage from most scientific works) and upon the skilful student of literature, who completes the work of interpretation through his imagination.

It may be noted in passing that not merely fiction but reality may be imaginatively treated by writer or reader. Carlyle in his *French Revolution* narrates the facts in such a way as to stimulate the reader's imagination and to enable him to enter into the life depicted. An historian like Prof. S. R. Gardiner, on the other hand, writes, in the main, to convey accurate information to the intellect, not to quicken his reader's realization of the past as actual. Unfortunately, but naturally enough, the imaginative writer of history is apt to be inaccurate; the very accurate writer, unimaginative; so that the reader encounters either what is false or what is dry. But poets, dramatists, and novelists, who have their facts in their own control, may, without falsifying them, shape them to their own purpose; and that purpose primarily is that the reader should, as fully and intensely as the limits of imagination permit, enter into the experiences depicted.

II.

Results of the Study of Literature.

Three Results of Education.—Any study that has educational value confers Knowledge, Discipline, or Culture. It is desirable that the memory should be stored with facts and ideas,—that is, with *Knowledge*; that each faculty should be trained to do easily and well that which it is designed to do,—such training is *Discipline*; that a man should have *all* his faculties harmoniously developed, so that he shall realize to the fullest extent all the possibilities of his nature—that is

Culture. These three things cannot be definitely separated ; they run into one another ; particularly between the second and the third no line can be accurately drawn. It is not in their processes that discipline and culture are unlike, but in their aims and their points of view. Discipline regards the man as a means to an end ; it seeks to bring a faculty into the highest state of efficiency for the production of some external result—in order that the man may make good watches, or horse-shoes, or may add to the store of human knowledge, or heal disease, or direct and guide large bodies of men, etc. ; but in developing him into an extremely efficient artizan, or investigator, or physician, or statesman, his perfection as a man may, quite possibly, be sacrificed. Discipline may produce an extraordinarily useful member of society ; yet the individual regarded in and for himself, may be a very limited and monstrous specimen of humanity ; whereas culture regards the man in and for himself, not as the producer of something outside of himself.

Knowledge Resulting from the Study of Literature.—Let us consider, then, what is the educational value of the study of literature—especially as it is pursued in schools—in each of these three respects ; and first as regards knowledge. Since literature, as we have seen, includes all books, and books are the chief repositories of ascertained knowledge, the study of literature in its widest sense ought to bestow extensive and varied information ; this information, however, is likely to be miscellaneous and unsystematic ; and such knowledge is not for practical purposes very effective ; but it widens one's interests, it enlarges the mental vision, it adds to the happiness and dignity of life—that is it contributes to culture. Knowledge which is to be practically effective should be profound and systematic—knowledge acquired by scientific, not by literary, methods. Indeed, as has been pointed out in considering the nature of literary study, the facts embodied are, to the student of literature, of merely secondary importance. And, if we take literature in its narrower and proper sense, little positive information is gained from familiarity with it. The study of the *Selections* in this volume will manifestly not give nearly as much positive knowledge as the same amount of mental effort employed on a text-book in science or

history. Definite knowledge is not the strong point in the study of literature; yet as knowledge is the most obvious and easily comprehended result of education, there is a popular tendency to emphasize and make much of it. Hence the undue stress usually put upon the annotation of literary texts, because notes give a definite information. For the genuine study of literature, however, annotation is valuable only in so far as it enables the reader to understand the text better, to enter more completely into the writer's mind. Apart from this service its value is small. Unorganized knowledge,—the disconnected scraps of history, science, biography, etc., which we find in notes—is, compared with systematic knowledge, meaningless and useless, and little likely to be retained by the memory.

But there is a sort of knowledge obtained from the study of literature,—of literature, too, in its most proper and narrow sense,—which though often overlooked, is of great value, viz., the concrete knowledge of human nature and of life. The knowledge which science gives is abstract and generalized; it is derived and artificial, built up upon another sort of knowledge altogether, viz., concrete knowledge,—the knowledge of things as we see them and of experiences as we actually have them. We have never had any experience of 'a triangle' as mathematically defined, nor of 'a German' in the abstract, nor of 'force' in general, but always of certain individual things to which we apply these names. A critic makes, let us say, a true general statement with regard to the style of Tennyson; a reader with a genuine appreciation of literature, but with no tendency or need to analyze his impressions, may be thoroughly familiar with Tennyson's poetry, and hence with this peculiarity of style, and yet never have thought of this general truth. His knowledge is, notwithstanding, really more accurate and fuller than that conveyed by the critic's statement. A writer makes an assertion (as true, let us suppose, as such assertions can be) in regard to the German national character; a keen observer who has lived much in Germany, may have a much more accurate and fuller acquaintance with Germans, and yet be quite incapable of making this generalization for himself. This is not said to disparage

general knowledge,—which is from another point of view the higher,—but to draw attention to the differences between scientific and concrete knowledge, and to the fact that, from certain points of view, the latter is the truer and the more useful. Especially is concrete knowledge essential, when action is needful. Physicians acquire certain general principles, but the thing that makes the successful practitioner is the knowledge that comes from experience,—from having observed keenly a large number of individual cases. This knowledge directly suggests the treatment of the new case without the conscious intervention of any generalization. Could the knowledge of the skilful practitioner be generalized, it might be transmitted to another physician entire; but this is not so; the skill dies with the man. So, the teacher whose dealings with his pupils are based solely on the generalizations of psychology or of educational experience, can never succeed. Success depends mainly on the concrete knowledge which enables him to act upon the spur of the moment, through intuition, not through any process of general reasoning. “Histories,” says Bacon in his pregnant essay, *Of Studies*, “make men wise”; and that is because they deal with men, not abstractly, but as individuals acting as we see them acting in real life. The best imaginative literature, for a like reason, makes men wise. The most characteristic knowledge which literature affords is of the same concrete nature as that which is given by actual contact with men and things. The person who is familiar with Shakespeare’s dramas gains a direct knowledge of and insight into human nature such as no scientific treatise can give him—a knowledge which may supplement the necessarily limited experience of any individual. Hence the real worth of novels; they widen our limited observation of concrete men and women, and the way in which they live. In the best literature, as has been indicated in what is said of style, we come almost into personal contact with great men, the writers themselves; in imaginative literature, we widen our experience of life.

The Discipline Imparted by Literature.—As to discipline: the study of literature of course disciplines many faculties, but this discipline has its value from the point of view of culture, rather than because it

leads up directly to any external end. There are, however, one or two valuable results for practical purposes arising from the discipline afforded by the study of literature. In the first place, this study, above any other, teaches us how to read, familiarizes us with books, enables us to grasp their meaning accurately, fully, and readily; and this is one of the best practical preparations for after life, because through books is one of the chief and most accessible avenues to knowledge. Everyone has noted the disadvantage under which the ill-taught reader labours, who painfully plods his way along the printed page with finger following each word. But it is not so often noted how people with a fair amount of education labour under a similar disadvantage to a smaller degree; they find the reading of anything but the lightest literature a heavy task; and when they do read, fail to grasp adequately the import of the passage. Such people may follow a lecturer with ease and pleasure; they are accustomed to oral communications; the speaker's personality, his tone, give light and vividness to the subject. But, as we have seen, the personality of the writer may be felt through the written word also by him whose literary faculty has been trained. The study of literature properly pursued affords the specific training needful for facility in the mastering of written thought, forms the habit of reading, and instils a taste for books. It is this power and taste which alone, in most cases, render it possible that the mental culture begun at school may be continued in later life, and that the narrow limits of acquired knowledge may be widened. It need scarcely be added that the study of literature is an important instrument for the highly practical purpose of developing the power of expression: furnishing, as it does, a wide vocabulary, a store of phrases and sentence-forms, an accurate appreciation of the meaning and uses of words which are essential to the clear and effective utterance of one's own thoughts in speaking and writing.

Literature as an Instrument of Culture.—But it is above all as an instrument and source of culture, that literature is eminent among the studies of a school curriculum. Its especial value is not practical; it does not contribute so directly as many other studies towards enabling

a man to make a livelihood ; its value lies in the fact that it tends to elevate and broaden the inner life : to give wider interests, breadth of view, openness of mind, loftier sources of pleasure. It is such qualities as these that we connect with culture ; as we connect the ideas of narrowness, one-sidedness, smallness and pettiness, and lack of internal resource with its opposite. Imagine a man who has spent his whole life in some small, secluded, and backward community, who has never travelled or seen other phases of life, whose intercourse has been confined to persons hedged in by the same limitations as himself, whose education has been elementary, and who is unfamiliar with books. Such a man may naturally possess good ability, certain parts of his nature may have been disciplined by the practical work of life. He may be very skilful in his business, and a very useful member of society ; but his knowledge will inevitably be small, his basis for forming judgments of men and events outside his small familiar sphere utterly inadequate, his sympathies contracted, his inner resources few, his whole life and nature dwarfed. In short, he will not be a man of culture. Imagine a man of similar endowments whose life has brought him into close contact with a great many different social conditions, who has seen and mingled with the world, with all sorts and conditions of men, who has lived on terms of familiarity with many great minds. Such a man could scarcely escape that general stimulation of his whole nature which we call culture. Now, observe that the man who has a taste for literature, as literature, and possesses a wide familiarity with books, is in much the same position as this second imaginary individual. He is familiar with a great range of ideas—not limited to any one department of thought but belonging to many, especially to those which treat most directly of human life. He has come into contact with a number of the greatest men who have ever lived, the great writers, namely ; has not merely learned what they have thought, but through the power of style has come under the influence of their personality. He has become acquainted with the life and manner of thinking in communities unlike his own—in distant ages and countries. In imaginative literature he has lived through a vast range of emotional experiences, has entered

sympathetically into characters and lives remote from his own—has, in a fashion at least, passed through numberless possibilities of human experience. All this must inevitably give culture. The lives of the majority of men are narrow ; in new countries like our own, the variety and range of interest in most communities is small ; but in literature we have an instrument within the reach of every one who has received an elementary literary training at school, and an instrument for developing every side of our nature, moral, emotional, intellectual.

POEMS.

TENNYSON.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
 The forward-flowing tide of time ;
And many a sheeny summer-morn, 5
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old ;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
 For it was in the golden prime 10
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue : 15
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side :
 In sooth it was a goodly time, 20
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard
 The outlet, did I turn away
 The boat-head down a broad canal 25
 From the main river sluiced, where all
 The sloping of the moon-lit sward
 Was damask-work, and deep inlay
 Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
 Adown to where the water slept. 30
 A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
 Ridged the smooth level, bearing on 35
 My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
 Until another night in night
 I enter'd, from the clearer light,
 Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
 Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb 40
 Heavenward were stay'd beneath the dome
 Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal 45
 Is rounded to as clear a lake.
 From the green rivage many a fall
 Of diamond rillets musical,
 Thro' little crystal arches low
 Down from the central fountain's flow 50
 Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake
 The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
 A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid. 55

Above thro' many a bowery turn
 A walk with vary-colour'd shells
 Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
 All round about the fragrant marge
 From fluted vase, and brazen urn 60
 In order, eastern flowers large,
 Some dropping low their crimson bells
 Half-closed, and others studded wide
 With disks and tiars, fed the time
 With odour in the golden prime 65
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
 In closest coverture upsprung,
 The living airs of middle night
 Died round the bulbul as he sung ; 70
 Not he : but something which possess'd
 The darkness of the world, delight,
 Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
 Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,
 Apart from place, withholding time, 75
 But flattering the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
 Slumber'd : the solemn palms were ranged
 Above, unwoo'd of summer wind : 80
 A sudden splendour from behind
 Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
 And, flowing rapidly between
 Their interspaces, counterchanged
 The level lake with diamond-plots 85
 Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
 Distinct with vivid stars inlaid, 90
 Grew darker from that under-flame :
 So, leaping lightly from the boat,
 With silver anchor left afloat,
 In marvel whence that glory came
 Upon me, as in sleep I sank 95
 In cool soft turf upon the bank,
 Entranced with that place and time,
 So worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn— 100
 A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
 And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
 Full of the city's stilly sound,
 And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
 The stately cedar, tamarisks, 105
 Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
 Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
 Graven with emblems of the time,
 In honour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid. 110

With dazed vision unawares
 From the long alley's latticed shade
 Emerged, I came upon the great
 Pavilion of the Caliphat.
 Right to the carven cedarn doors, 115
 Flung inward over spangled floors,
 Broad-based flights of marble stairs,
 Ran up with golden balustrade,
 After the fashion of the time,
 And humour of the golden prime 120
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted silvers look'd to shame 125
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
Upon the mooned domes aloof
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
Hundreds of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time 130
To celebrate the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes 135
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Tressed with redolent ebony,
In many a dark delicious curl,
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ; 140
The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underpropt a rich 145
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diaper'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd 150
With merriment of kingly pride,
Sole star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,
THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

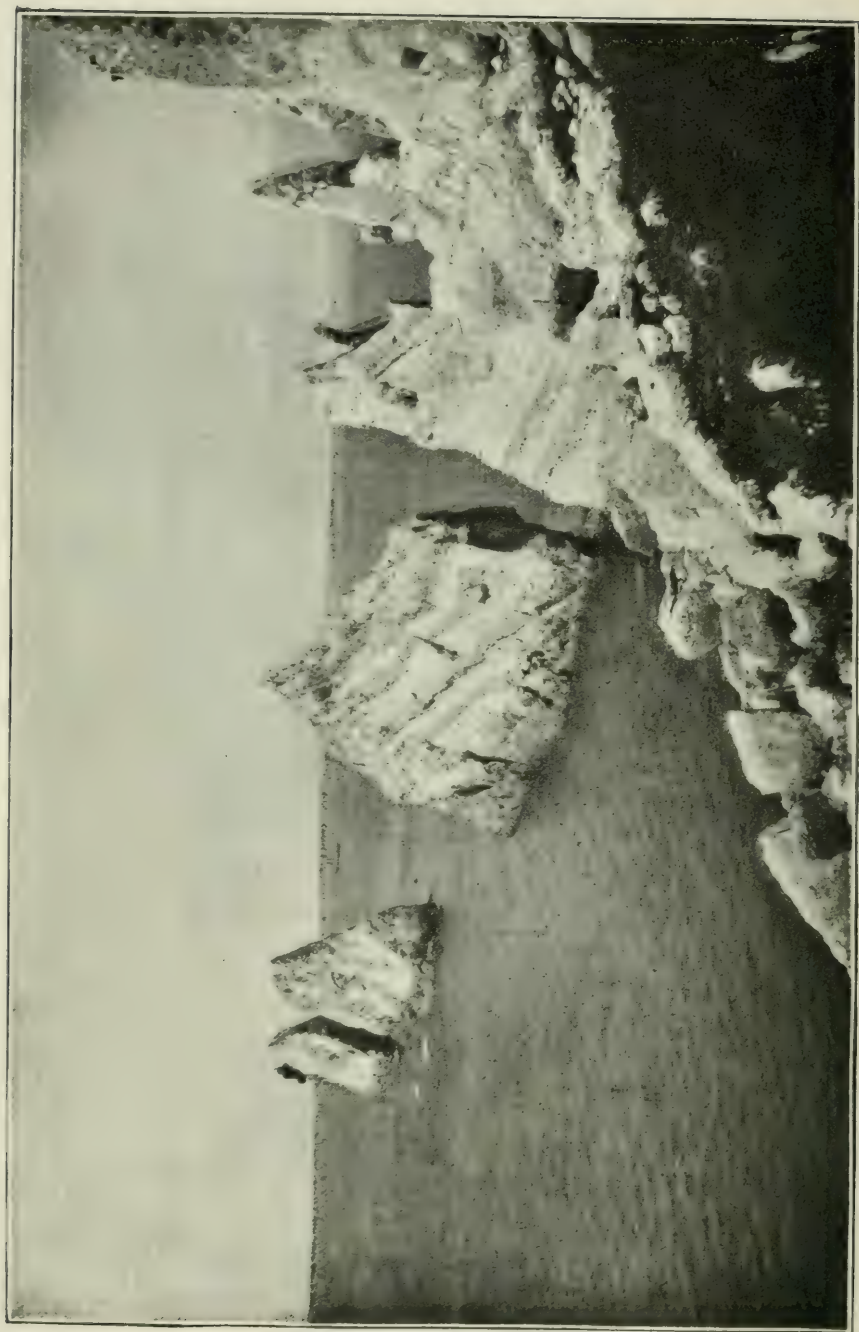
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot ; 5
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver, 10
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers, 15
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd 20
 By slow horses ; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot ;
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
 Or at the casement seen her stand ? 25
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott ?



*View of the Coast in the Neighbourhood of Tennyson's Residence,
Farringford, Isle of Wight.*

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly 30
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot :
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy 35
 Lady of Shalott.'

PART II.

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay 40
 To look down to Camelot.

She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott. 45

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot : 50

There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad, 55
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,

Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue 60
 The knights come riding two and two :
 She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
 To weave the mirror's magic sights, 65
 For often thro' the silent nights
 A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot .
 Or when the moon was overhead,
 Came two young lovers lately wed ; 70
 ' I am half sick of shadows,' said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,
 The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves, 75
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
 A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
 To a lady in his shield,
 That sparkled on the yellow field, 80
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
 Like to some branch of stars we see
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.
 The bridle bells rang merrily 85
 As he rode down to Camelot :

And from his blazon'd baldric slung
 A mighty silver bugle hung,
 And as he rode his armour rung,
 Beside remote Shalott. 90

All in the blue unclouded weather
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
 The helmet and the helmet-feather
 Burn'd like one burning flame together,
 As he rode down to Camelot. 95
 As often thro' the purple night,
 Below the starry clusters bright,
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ; 100
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
 From underneath his helmet flow'd
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down to Camelot.
 From the bank and from the river 105
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
 'Tirra lirra,' by the river
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
 She made three paces thro' the room, 110
 She saw the water-lily bloom,
 She saw the helmet and the plume,
 She look'd down to Camelot.
 Out flew the web and floated wide ;
 The mirror crack'd from side to side ; 115
 'The curse is come upon me,' cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
 The pale yellow woods were waning,
 The broad stream in his banks complaining, 120
 Heavily the low sky raining

Over tower'd Camelot ;
 Down she came and found a boat
 Beneath a willow left afloat,
 And round about the prow she wrote 125
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
 Like some bold seër in a trance,
 Seeing all his own mischance—
 With a glassy countenance 130
 Did she look to Camelot.

And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain and down she lay ;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott. 135

Lying, robed in snowy white
 That loosely flew to left and right—
 The leaves upon her falling light—
 Thro' the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot : 140

And as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy, 145
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,

And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.

For ere she reach'd upon the tide 150
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery, 155
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame, 160
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer; 165
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, 'She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace, 170
The Lady of Shalott.'

CENONE.

There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
 The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand 5
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
 The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus 10
 Stands up and takes the morning : but in front
 The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon 15

Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn
 Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
 Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
 Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.
 She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine, 20
 Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
 Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

' O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 For now the noon-day quiet holds the hill : 25
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
 The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
 Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.*
 The purple flowers droop : the golden bee
 Is lily-cradled : I alone awake. 30

* See note on this line.

My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

‘O mother Ida, many-fountain’d Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 35
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crown’d snake ! O mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls 40
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gather’d shape : for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

‘O mother Ida, many-fountain’d Ida, 45
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy dark aloft the mountain pine :
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris, 50
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn’d, white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

‘O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call’d me from the cleft :
Far up the solitary morning smote 55
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes
I sat alone : white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard skin
Droop’d from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
Cluster’d about his temples like a God’s : 60
And his cheek brighten’d as the foam-bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

‘ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm 65
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look’d
And listen’d, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.

‘ “ My own Ænone, 70

Beautiful-brow’d Ænone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav’n
‘ For the most fair,’ would seem to award it thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace 75
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.”

‘ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added “ This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods 80
Ranged in the halls of Peleus ; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom ’twere due :
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day, 85
Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.” 90

‘ Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

It was the deep midnight : one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower, 95
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,

Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
 Lotus and lilies : and a wind arose,
 And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon 100
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
 With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
 And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and lean'd 105
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made 110
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue
 Wherewith to embellish state, "from many a vale
 And river-sunder'd champaign clothed with corn,
 Or labour'd mine undrainable of ore. 115
 Honour," she said, "and homage, tax and toll,
 From many an inland town and haven large,
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die. 120
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
 "Which in all action is the end of all ;
 Power fitted to the season ; wisdom-bred
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbour crowns
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand 125
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd 130
 Rest in a happy place, and quiet seats
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss
 In knowledge of their own supremacy."

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit 135
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold, 140
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

' "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power. 145
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear ;
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence." 150 •

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Again she said : " I woo thee not with gifts.
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest. 155

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity disrobed
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
 Unbias'd by self-profit, oh ! rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee, 160
 So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,

Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will, 165
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commesure perfect freedom."

' Here she ceas'd,
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, " O Paris,
 Give it to Pallas !" but he heard me not, 170
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

' O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Idalian Aphroditè beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells, 175
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shoulder : from the violets her light foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form 180
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh, 185
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, " I promise thee
 The fairest and most loving wife in Greece,"
 She spoke and laugh'd : I shut my sight for fear :
 But when I look'd, Paris had raised his arm,
 And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes, 190
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
 And I was left alone within the bower ;
 And from that time to this I am alone,
 And I shall be alone until I die.

' Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die. 195
 Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
 My love hath told me so a thousand times.
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail 200
 Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?
 Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
 Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest
 Close close to thine in that quick-falling dew
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains 205
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

' O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
 My tall dark pines, that plumed the craggy ledge
 High over the blue gorge, and all between 210
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
 Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn
 The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
 Low in the valley. Never, never more 215
 Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist
 Sweep thro' them; never see them over-laid
 With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
 Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

' O mother, hear me yet before I die. 220
 I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,
 Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
 Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her
 The Abominable, that uninvited came
 Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall, 225
 And cast the golden fruit upon the board,

And bred this change ; that I might speak my mind,
 And tell her to her face how much I hate
 Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

‘ O mother, hear me yet before I die. 230
 Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,
 In this green valley, under this green hill,
 Ev’n on this hand, and sitting on this stone ?
 Seal’d it with kisses ? water’d it with tears ?
 O happy tears, and how unlike to these ! 235
 O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face ?
 O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight ?
 O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,
 There are enough unhappy on this earth,
 Pass by the happy souls, that love to live : 240
 I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
 And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
 Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
 Weigh heavy on my eyelids : let me die.

‘ O mother, hear me yet before I die. 245
 I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
 Do shape themselves within me, more and more,
 Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
 Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
 Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see 250
 My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
 Conjectures of the features of her child
 Ere it is born : her child !—a shudder comes
 Across me : never child be born of me,
 Unblest, to vex me with his father’s eyes ! 255

‘ O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
 Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me

Walking the cold and starless road of Death
 Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love 260
 With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
 Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
 Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
 A fire dances before her, and a sound
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men. 265
 What this may be I know not, but I know
 That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
 All earth and air seem only burning fire.'

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

'Courage!' he said, and pointed toward the land,
 'This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon.'
 In the afternoon they came unto a land
 In which it seemed always afternoon.
 All round the coast the languid air did swoon, 5
 Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
 Full-faced above the valley stood the moon ;
 And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke, 10
 Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go,
 And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
 They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
 From the inner land : far off, three mountain tops, 15
 Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
 Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with showery drops,
 Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
 In the red West : thro' mountain clefts the dale 20
 Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
 Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
 And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
 A land where all things always seemed the same !
 And round about the keel with faces pale, 25
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
 Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
 To each, but whoso did receive of them, 30
 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
 Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
 On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;
 And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake, 35
 And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
 Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;
 And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
 Of child, and wife, and slave ; but ever-more 40
 Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
 Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
 Then some one said, ' We will return no more ;'
 And all at once they sang, ' Our island home
 Is far beyond the wave ; we will no longer roam.' 45

CHORIC SONG.

I.

There is sweet music here that softer falls
 Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
 Or night-dews on still waters between walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
 Music that gentlier on the spirit lies, 50
 Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
 Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
 Here are cool mosses deep,
 And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
 And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep, 55
 And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
 And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
 While all things else have rest from weariness ?
 All things have rest : why should we toil alone, 60
 We only toil, who are the first of things,
 And make perpetual moan,
 Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
 Nor ever fold our wings,
 And cease from wanderings, 65
 Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;
 Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
 'There is no joy but calm !'
 Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things ?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood, 70
 The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
 With winds upon the branch, and there
 Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
 Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
 Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow 75
 Falls, and floats adown the air.
 Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
 The full-juiced apple waxing over-mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.
 All its allotted length of days, 80
 The flower ripens in its place,
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
 Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea. 85
 Death is the end of life ; ah, why
 Should life all labour be ?
 Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
 And in a little while our lips are dumb.
 Let us alone. What is it that will last ? 90
 All things are taken from us, and become
 Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
 Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
 To war with evil ? Is there any peace
 In ever climbing up the climbing wave ? 95
 All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
 In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
 Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

V.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
 With half-shut eyes ever to seem 100
 Falling asleep in a half-dream !
 To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
 Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height ;
 To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
 Eating the Lotos day by day, 105
 To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
 And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;

To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
 To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;
 To muse and brood and live again in memory, 110
 With those old faces of our infancy
 Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
 Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
 And dear the last embraces of our wives 115
 And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change :
 For surely now our household hearths are cold :
 Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
 And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
 Or else the island princes over-bold 120
 Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
 Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
 And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
 Is there confusion in the little isle ?
 Let what is broken so remain. 125
 The Gods are hard to reconcile :
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.
 There is confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labour unto aged breath, 130
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
 With half-dropt eyelid still, 135
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
 To watch the long bright river drawing slowly

His waters from the purple hill—
 To hear the dewy echoes calling
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine— 140
 To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak : 145
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
 All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone :
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
 Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotus-dust
 is blown.
 We have had enough of action, and of motion we, 150
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was
 seething free,
 Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains
 in the sea.
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
 On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind. 155
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
 curl'd
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
 world :
 Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
 and fiery sands, 160
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
 and praying hands.
 But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the
 soil, 165

Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
 Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—
 down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel. 170
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
 Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

‘YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO’ ILL AT EASE.’

You ask me, why, tho’ ill at ease,
 Within this region I subsist,
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,
 And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till, 5
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,
 The land, where girt with friends or foes
 A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,
 A land of just and old renown, 10
 Where Freedom slowly broadens down
 From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,
 But by degrees to fullness wrought,
 The strength of some diffusive thought 15
 Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
 Opinion, and induce a time
 When single thought is civil crime,
 And individual freedom mute ; 20

Tho’ Power should make from land to land
 The name of Britain trebly great—
 Tho’ every channel of the State
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth, 25
 Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,
 And I will see before I die
 The palms and temples of the South.

‘OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS.’

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
 The thunders breaking at her feet :
 Above her shook the starry lights :
 She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice, 5
 Self-gather’d in her prophet-mind,
 But fragments of her mighty voice
 Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro’ town and field
 To mingle with the human race, 10
 And part by part to men reveal’d
 The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
 From her isle-altar gazing down,
 Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks, 15
 And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.
 The wisdom of a thousand years
 Is in them. May perpetual youth
 Keep dry their light from tears ; 20

That her fair form may stand and shine,
 Make bright our days and light our dreams,
 Turning to scorn with lips divine
 The falsehood of extremes !

‘LOVE THOU THY LAND, WITH LOVE
 FAR-BROUGHT.’

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
 From out the storied Past, and used
 Within the Present, but transfused
 Thro’ future time by power of thought.

True love turn’d round on fixed poles, 5
 Love, that endures not sordid ends,
 For English natures, freemen, friends,
 Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
 Nor feed with crude imaginings 10
 The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
 That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for day, 15
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds. 20

Watch what main-currents draw the years :
Cut Prejudice against the grain :
But gentle words are always gain :
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch 25
Of pension, neither count on praise :
It grows to guerdon after-days :
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
Not master'd by some modern term ; 30
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly, binds—
Set in all lights by many minds, 35
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form. 40

Meet is it changes should control
 Our being, lest we rust in ease.
 We all are changed by still degrees,
 All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free 45
 To ingroove itself with that which flies,
 And work, a joint of state, that plies
 Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;
 For all the past of Time reveals 50
 A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
 Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
 A motion toiling in the gloom—
 The Spirit of the years to come 55
 Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
 Completion in a painful school ;
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,
 New Majesties of mighty States— 60

The warders of the growing hour,
 But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;
 And round them sea and air are dark
 With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd, 65
 Is bodied forth the second whole.
 Regard gradation, lest the soul
 Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
And heap their ashes on the head ; 70
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth 75
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood ; 80

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay, 85
Would serve his kind in deed and word,
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke
From either side, nor veil his eyes : 90
And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we bear blossom of the dead ;
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed 95
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

THE EPIC.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve,—
 The game of forfeits done—the girls all kiss'd
 Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
 The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl, 5
 Then half-way ebb'd : and there we held a talk,
 How all the old honour had from Christmas gone,
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
 In some odd nooks like this ; till I, tired out
 With cutting eights that day upon the pond, 10
 Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,
 I bump'd the ice into three several stars,
 Fell in a doze ; and half-awake I heard
 The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
 Now harping on the church-commissioners, 15
 Now hawking at Geology and schism ;
 Until I woke, and found him settled down
 Upon the general decay of faith
 Right thro' the world, 'at home was little left,
 And none abroad : there was no anchor, none, 20
 To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt his hand
 On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by him.'
 'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-bowl.'
 'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift that way
 At college : but another which you had, 25
 I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
 What came of that?' 'You know,' said Frank, 'he burnt
 His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books'—
 And then to me demanding why? 'Oh, sir,
 He thought that nothing new was said, or else 30
 Something so said 'twas nothing—that a truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day :
 God knows : he has a mint of reasons : ask.
 It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,' said Hall,
 'Why take the style of those heroic times ? 35
 For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
 Nor we those times ; and why should any man
 Remodel models ? these twelve books of mine
 Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
 Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.' 'But I,' 40
 Said Francis, 'pick'd the eleventh from this hearth
 And have it : keep a thing, its use will come.
 I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'
 He laugh'd, and I, tho' sleepy, like a horse
 That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears ; 45
 For I remember'd Everard's college fame
 When we were Freshmen : then at my request
 He brought it ; and the poet little urged,
 But with some prelude of disparagement,
 Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes, 50
 Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
 Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
 King Arthur : then, because his wound was deep, 5
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,

That stood on a dark strait of barren land. 10
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
 'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights 15
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
 They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
 Shall never more, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
 Walking about the gardens and the halls 20
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I made,—
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
 To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm 25
 That without help I cannot last till morn.
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
 Which was my pride : for thou rememberest how
 In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake, 30
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
 And took it, and have worn it, like a king :
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known : 35
 But now delay not : take Excalibur,
 And fling him far into the middle mere :
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
 'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus, 40
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
 A little thing may harm a wounded man.
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,

Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept 45
 And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
 Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
 By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock, 50
 Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
 And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt : 55
 For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
 Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
 Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
 That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift mind, 60
 In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
 So strode he back slow to the wounded King. 65

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
 'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave ?
 What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
 'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds, 70
 And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :
 'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
 Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
 Thy féalty, nor like a noble knight : 75
 For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing 80
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt, 85
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,
' And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth, 90
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done ?
What harm, undone ? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand 95
An act unprofitable, against himself ?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt ? but were this kept, 100
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, " King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps 105
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit, 110
And hid Excalibur the second time,

And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

‘What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?’

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere : 115

‘I heard the water lapping on the crag,

And the long ripple washing in the reeds.’

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :

‘Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,

Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me ! 120

Authority forgets a dying king,

Laid widow’d of the power in his eye

That bow’d the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all, 125

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl

Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,

And the third time may prosper, get thee hence : 130

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,

I will arise and slay thee with my hands.’

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch’d the sword, 135

And strongly wheel’d and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl’d in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock 140

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash’d and fell the brand Excalibur :

But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish’d him 145

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :

‘Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen ?’ 150

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

‘Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not tho’ I live three lives of mortal men, 155

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;

But when I look’d again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish’d him 160

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.’

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

‘My end draws nigh ; ’tis time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear 165

My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.’

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,

And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 170

Remorsefully regarded thro’ his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O’er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,

And rising bore him thro’ the place of tombs. 175

But, as he walk’d, King Arthur panted hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh’d the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear, ‘Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die.' 180

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him, like a goad. 185

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels— 190

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were ware 195

That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream —by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice an agony 200

Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge,'
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens 205
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud, 210

And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;
 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops 215
 Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—
 That made his forehead like a rising sun
 High from the daïs-throne—were parch'd with dust ;
 Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
 Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips. 220
 So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings. 225

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
 ' Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?
 For now I see the true old times are dead,
 When every morning brought a noble chance, 230
 And every chance brought out a noble knight.
 Such times have been not since the light that led
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
 But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
 Which was an image of the mighty world ; 235
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years,
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge :
 ' The old order changeth, yielding place to new, 240
 And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
 Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 May He within Himself make pure ! but thou, 245
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats 250
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God. 255
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
 To the island-valley of Avilion;
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 260
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'
 So said he, and the barge with oar and sail 265
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull 270
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long
 Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell:
 At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound, 275
 And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!' but we
 Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—
 Perhaps some modern touches here and there
 Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—

Or else we loved the man, and prized his work ; 280
 I know not : but we sitting, as I said,
 The cock crew loud ; as at that time of year
 The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn :
 Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
 ‘ There now—that’s nothing ! ’ drew a little back, 285
 And drove his heel into the smoulder’d log,
 That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue ;
 And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I seem’d
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
 Point after point ; till on to dawn, when dreams 290
 Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
 To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
 There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
 King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
 Of stateliest port ; and all the people cried, 295
 ‘ Arthur is come again : he cannot die.’
 Then those that stood upon the hills behind
 Repeated—‘ Come again, and thrice as fair ;’
 And, further inland, voices echo’d -- ‘ Come
 With all good things, and war shall be no more.’ 300
 At this a hundred bells began to peal,
 That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
 The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas-morn.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
 Match’d with an aged wife, I mete and dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me. 5

I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
 Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
 That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades 10
 Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ; 15
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
 I am a part of all that I have met ;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades 20
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
 Were all too little, and of one to me 25
 Little remains : but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
 This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil 35
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere

Of common duties, decent not to fail 40
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her sail :
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners, 45
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ; 50
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep 55
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho' 65
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. 70

ST. AGNES' EVE.

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon :
My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
May my soul follow soon !
The shadows of the convent-towers 5
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord :
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies, 10
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground ;
As this pale taper's earthly spark, 15
To yonder argent round ;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee ;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be. 20
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ; 25
The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,
And deepens on and up ! the gates
Roll back, and far within 30

For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits
 To make me pure of sin,
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 A light upon the shining sea— 35
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high, 5
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands, 10
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.
 How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
 For them I battle till the end, 15
 To save from shame and thrall :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine. 20
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill :
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes, 25
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns :
Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
I hear a voice but none are there ; 30
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings, 35
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark ;
I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
I float till all is dark. 40
A gentle sound, an awful light !
Three angels bear the holy Grail :
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God ! 45
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go, 50
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail ;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads, 55
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields. 60

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease, 65
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear, 70
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony 75
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
'O just and faithful knight of God !
Ride on ! the prize is near.' 80
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

'AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT.'

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out I know not why,
 And kiss'd again with tears. 5
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears !
 For when we came where lies the child 10
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

'SWEET AND LOW, SWEET AND LOW.'

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
 Wind of the western sea,
 Low, low, breathe and blow,
 Wind of the western sea !
 Over the rolling waters go, 5
 Come from the dying moon, and blow,
 Blow him again to me ;
 While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.
 Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
 Father will come to thee soon ; 10
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
 Father will come to thee soon ;
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,
 Silver sails all out of the west
 Under the silver moon : 15
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

‘THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS.’

The splendour falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story :
 The long light shakes across the lakes,
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying, 5
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing ! 10
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill or field or river :
 Our echoes roll from soul to soul, 15
 And grow for ever and for ever.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

‘TEARS, IDLE TEARS, I KNOW NOT WHAT THEY
 MEAN.’

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
 Tears from the depth of some divine despair
 Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
 In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
 And thinking of the days that are no more. 5

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more. 10

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more. 15

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more. 20

‘THY VOICE IS HEARD THRO’ ROLLING DRUMS.’

Thy voice is heard thro’ rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands ;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands :
A moment, while the trumpets blow, 5
He sees his brood about thy knee ;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

‘HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD.’

Home they brought her warrior dead :
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry :
All her maidens, watching, said,
‘She must weep or she will die.’

Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Call'd him worthy to be loved,
 Truest friend and noblest foe ;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

5

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,
 Took the face-cloth from the face ;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

10

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee —
 Like summer tempest came her tears—
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

15

'ASK ME NO MORE: THE MOON MAY DRAW
 THE SEA.'

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea ;
 The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
 With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
 But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?
 Ask me no more.

5

Ask me no more: what answer should I give ?
 I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
 Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !
 Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
 Ask me no more.

10

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd :
 I strove against the stream and all in vain :
 Let the great river take me to the main :
 No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
 Ask me no more.

15





Somersby Brook.

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted ; I to the **East**
 And he for Italy—too late—too late :
 One whom the strong sons of the world despise ;
 For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
 And mellow metres more than cent for cent ;
 Nor could he understand how money breeds,
 Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself could make
 The thing that is not as the thing that is.
 O had he lived ! In our schoolbooks we say,
 Of those that held their heads above the crowd, 10
 They flourish'd then or then ; but life in him
 Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
 On such a time as goes before the leaf,
 When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
 And nothing perfect : yet the brook he loved,
 For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
 Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air
 I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
 Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,
 To me that loved him ; for ' O brook,' he says, 20
 ' O babbling brook,' says Edmund in his rhyme,
 ' Whence come you ?' and the brook, why not ? replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
 I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
 To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
 Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
 And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
 Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
 It has more ivy ; there the river ; and there
 Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
 In little sharps and trebles, 40
 I bubble into eddying bays,
 I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
 By many a field and fallow,
 And many a fairy foreland set
 With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever. 50

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird ;
 Old Philip ; all about the fields you caught
 His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
 High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
 With here a blossom sailing,
 And here and there a lusty trout,
 And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
 Upon me, as I travel 60
 With many a silvery waterbreak
 Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

‘O darling Katie Willows, his one child !
 A maiden of our century, yet most meek ;
 A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse ;
 Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand ;
 Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
 Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

70

‘Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
 Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
 James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
 For here I came, twenty years back—the week
 Before I parted with poor Edmund ; crost
 By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
 Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
 Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
 Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
 And push’d at Philip’s garden gate. The gate,
 Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
 Stuck ; and he clamour’d from a casement, “ Run ”
 To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
 “ Run, Katie ! ” Katie never ran : she moved
 To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,
 A little flutter’d, with her eyelids down,
 Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

80

90

‘What was it? less of sentiment than sense
 Had Katie ; not illiterate ; nor of those
 Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
 And nursed by mealy-mouth’d philanthropies,
 Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

'She told me. She and James had quarrell'd. Why?
 What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
 James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,
 I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
 Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said. 100
 But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
 And sketching with her slender pointed foot
 Some figure like a wizard pentagram
 On garden gravel, let my query pass
 Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
 If James were coming. "Coming every day,"
 She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,
 But evermore her father came across
 With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;
 And James departed vext with him and her." 110
 How could I help her? "Would I—was it wrong?"
 (Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
 Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
 "O would I take her father for one hour,
 For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!"
 And even while she spoke, I saw where James
 Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
 Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
 For in I went, and call'd old Philip out 120
 To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
 He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
 Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
 He praised his land, his horses, his machines;
 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs;
 He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-hens;
 His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
 Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:
 Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took

Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each, 130
 And naming those, his friends, for whom they were :
 Then crost the common into Darnley chase
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
 Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said :
 "That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire."
 And there he told a long long-winded tale
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,
 And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd, 140
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
 To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
 And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
 But he stood firm ; and so the matter hung ;
 He gave them line : and five days after that
 He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
 Who then and there had offer'd something more,
 But he stood firm ; and so the matter hung ;
 He knew the man ; the colt would fetch its price ;
 He gave them line : and how by chance at last 150
 (It might be May or April, he forgot,
 The last of April or the first of May)
 He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
 And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
 And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
 Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

' Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
 Poor fellow, could he help it ? recommenced,
 And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
 Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho, 160
 Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
 Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,

Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
 And with me Philip, talking still ; and so
 We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
 And following our own shadows thrice as long
 As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,
 Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content
 Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots, 170
 I slide by hazel covers ;
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
 Among my skimming swallows ;
 I make the netted sunbeam dance
 Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
 In brambly wildernesses :
 I linger by my shingly bars ; 180
 I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go ; and these are gone,
 All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
 Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
 But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
 Of Brunelleschi ; sleeps in peace : and he, 190
 Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
 Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb :
 I scraped the lichen from it : Katie walks
 By the long wash of Australasian seas
 Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
 And breathes in converse seasons.* All are gone.'

* See note on this line.

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
 A tonsured head in middle age forlorn, 200
 Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
 Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
 The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings ;
 And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
 Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
 On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
 Divides threefold to show the fruit within :
 Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from the farm ?'
 'Yes' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little : pardon me ; 210
 What do they call you ?' 'Katie.' 'That were strange.
 What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!' 'That is my name.'
 'Indeed !' and here he look'd so self-perplext,
 That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
 Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
 Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
 Then looking at her ; 'Too happy, fresh and fair,
 Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
 To be the ghost of one who bore your name
 About these meadows, twenty years ago.' 220

'Have you not heard ?' said Katie, 'we came back.
 We bought the farm we tenanted before.
 Am I so like her ? so they said on board.
 Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
 My mother, as it seems you did, the days
 That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
 My brother James is in the harvest-field :
 But she—you will be welcome—O, come in !'

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1852.

I.

Bury the Great Duke

With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke

To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall, 5
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for, 10
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go, 15
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past. 20
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:

Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute, 25
 Whole in himself, a common good.
 Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
 Our greatest yet with least pretence,
 Great in council and great in war, 30
 Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good gray head which all men knew, 35
 O voice from which their omens all men drew,
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,
 O fall'n at length that tower of strength
 Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew !
 Such was he whom we deplore. 40
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done :
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 England, for thy son. 45
 Let the bell be toll'd.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mould.
 Under the cross of gold
 That shines over city and river, 50
 There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be toll'd :
 And a reverent people behold
 The towering car, the sable steeds : 55

Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be toll'd :
 And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd ;
 And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd 60
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
 And the volleying cannon thunder his loss ;
 He knew their voices of old.
 For many a time in many a clime
 His captain's-ear has heard them boom 65
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
 When he with those deep voices wrought,
 Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
 With those deep voices our dead captain taught
 The tyrant, and asserts his claim 70
 In that dread sound to the great name,
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,
 In praise and in dispraise the same,
 A man of well-attemper'd frame.
 O civic muse, to such a name, 75
 To such a name for ages long,
 To such a name,
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,
 And ever-ringing* avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest, 80
 With banner and with music, with soldier and with
 priest,
 With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest ?
 Mighty Seaman, this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.

* See note on this line.

Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man, 85
 The greatest sailor since our world began.
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
 To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
 For this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea ; 90
 His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
 O give him welcome, this is he
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee ;
 For this is England's greatest son, 95
 He that gain'd a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun ;
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye
 Clash'd with his fiery few and won ; 100
 And underneath another sun,
 Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted Lisbon drew
 The treble works, the vast designs
 Of his labour'd rampart-lines, 105
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew
 Beating from the wasted vines
 Back to France her banded swarms, 110
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen
 With blare of bugle, clamour of men, 115
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.

Again their ravening eagle rose
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings, 120
 And barking for the thrones of kings ;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
 A day of onsets of despair !
 Dash'd on every rocky square 125
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves away ;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and overthrew. 130
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo !
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile, 135
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all, 140
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame, 145
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
 Eternal honour to his name. 150

VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
 His Saxon* in blown seas and storming showers, 155
 We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul 160
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ; 165
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust. 170
 Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall ;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever ; and whatever tempests lour 175
 For ever silent ; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke ;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ; 180
 Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low ;

* See note on this line.

Whose life was work, whose language rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
 Who never spoke against a foe ; 185
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right :
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named ;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke ;
 Whatever record leap to light 190
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands 195
 Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state. 200
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes, 205
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory : 210
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
 His path upward, and prevail'd,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled 215

Are close upon the shining table-lands
 To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
 Such was he : his work is done.
 But while the races of mankind endure,
 Let his great example stand 220
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure :
 Till in all lands and thro' all human story
 The path of duty be the way to glory :
 And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
 For many and many an age proclaim 226
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 And when the long-illumined cities flame,
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him, 230
 Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
 By some yet unmoulded tongue
 Far on in summers that we shall not see :
 Peace, it is a day of pain 235
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung :
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
 Once the weight and fate of Europe hung. 240
 Ours the pain, be his the gain !
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 Whom we see not we revere ; 245
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,

And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane : 250
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true 255
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore 260
Make and break, and work their will ;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ? 265
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears :
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears :
The black earth yawns : the mortal disappears ;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ; 270
He is gone who seem'd so great,—
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State, 275
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him, 280
God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

I.

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade !' 5
Charge for the guns !' he said :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II.

'Forward, the Light Brigade !'
Was there a man dismay'd ? 10
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd :
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die : 15
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them 20
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell 25
Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
 Flash'd as they turn'd in air
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while 30
 All the world wonder'd :
 Plunged in the battery-smoke
 Right thro' the line they broke ;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke 35
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.
 Then they rode back, but not,
 Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them, 40
 Cannon behind them
 Volley'd and thunder'd ;
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,
 While horse and hero fell,
 They that had fought so well 45
 Came thro' the jaws of Death,
 Back from the mouth of Hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade ? 50
 O the wild charge they made !
 All the world wonder'd.
 Honour the charge they made !
 Honour the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred ! 55

‘BREAK, BREAK, BREAK.’

Break, break, break,

On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman’s boy, 5
That he shouts with his sister at play !
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on 10
To their haven under the hill ;
But O for the touch of a vanish’d hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead 15
Will never come back to me.

ENOCH ARDEN.

Long lines of cliff breaking have left a chasm ;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow sands ;
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf
In cluster ; then a moulder’d church ; and higher 5
A long street climbs to one tall-tower’d mill ;
And high in heaven behind it a gray down
With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago, 10
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd 15
Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats updrawn ;
And built their castles of dissolving sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following up 20
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the cliff:
In this the children play'd at keeping house.
Enoch was host one day, Philip the next, 25
While Annie still was mistress ; but at times
Enoch would hold possession for a week :
'This is my house and this my little wife.'
'Mine too,' said Philip 'turn and turn about :'
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch stronger-made 30
Was master : then would Philip, his blue eyes
All flooded with the helpless wrath of tears,
Shriek out 'I hate you, Enoch,' and at this
The little wife would weep for company,
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake, 35
And say she would be little wife to both.

But when the dawn of rosy childhood past,
And the new warmth of life's ascending sun
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
On that one girl ; and Enoch spoke his love, 40
But Philip loved in silence ; and the girl
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to him ;

But she loved Enoch ; tho' she knew it not,
 And would if asked deny it. Enoch set
 A purpose evermore before his eyes, 45
 To hoard all savings to the uttermost,
 To purchase his own boat, and make a home
 For Annie : and so prosper'd that at last
 A luckier or a bolder fisherman,
 A carefuller in peril, did not breathe 50
 For leagues along that breaker-beaten coast
 Than Enoch. Likewise had he served a year
 On board a merchantman, and made himself
 Full sailor ; and he thrice had pluck'd a life
 From the dread sweep of the downstreaming seas : 55
 And all men look'd upon him favourably :
 And ere he touch'd his one-and-twentieth May
 He purchased his own boat, and made a home
 For Annie, neat and nest-like, halfway up
 The narrow street that clamber'd toward the mill. 60

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,
 The younger people making holiday,
 With bag and sack and basket, great and small,
 Went nutting to the hazels. Philip stay'd
 (His father lying sick and needing him) 65
 An hour behind ; but as he climbed the hill,
 Just where the prone edge of the wood began
 To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
 Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
 His large gray eyes and weather-beaten face 70
 All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
 That burn'd as on an altar. Philip look'd,
 And in their eyes and faces read his doom ;
 Then, as their faces drew together, groan'd,
 And slipt aside, and like a wounded life 75

Crept down into the hollows of the wood ;
 There, while the rest were loud in merrymaking,
 Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and past
 Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells, 80
 And merrily ran the years, seven happy years,
 Seven happy years of health and competence,
 And mutual love and honourable toil ;
 With children ; first a daughter. In him woke,
 With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish 85
 To save all earnings to the uttermost,
 And give his child a better bringing up
 Than his had been, or hers ; a wish renew'd,
 When two years after came a boy to be
 The rosy idol of her solitudes, 90
 While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
 Or often journeying landward ; for in truth
 Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-spoil
 In ocean-smelling osier and his face,
 Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter gales, 95
 Not only to the market-cross were known,
 But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
 Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
 And peacock-yewtree of the lonely Hall,
 Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering. 100

Then came a change, as all things human change.
 Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
 Open'd a larger haven : thither used
 Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;
 And once when there, and clambering on a mast 105
 In harbour, by mischance he slipt and fell :
 A limb was broken when they lifted him ;
 And while he lay recovering there, his wife

Bore him another son, a sickly one :
 Another hand crept too across his trade 110
 Taking her bread and theirs : and on him fell,
 Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,
 Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
 He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
 To see his children leading evermore 115
 Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
 And her, he loved, a beggar : then he pray'd
 'Save them from this, whatever comes to me.'
 And while he pray'd, the master of that ship
 Enoch had served in, hearing his mischance, 120
 Came, for he knew the man and valued him,
 Reporting of his vessel China-bound,
 And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he go ?
 There yet were many weeks before she sail'd,
 Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch have the place? 125
 And Enoch all at once assented to it,
 Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that the shadow of mischance appear'd
 No graver than as when some little cloud
 Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun, 130
 And isles a light in the offing : yet the wife—
 When he was gone—the children—what to do ?
 Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his plans ;
 To sell the boat—and yet he loved her well—
 How many a rough sea had he weathered in her ! 135
 He knew her, as a horseman knows his horse—
 And yet to sell her—then with what she brought
 Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth in trade
 With all that seamen needed or their wives—
 So might she keep the house while he was gone. 140
 Should he not trade himself out yonder ? go

This voyage more than once? yea, twice or thrice—
 As oft as needed —last, returning rich,
 Become the master of a larger craft,
 With fuller profits lead an easier life, 145
 Have all his pretty young ones educated,
 And pass his days in peace among his own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined all :
 Then moving homeward came on Annie pale,
 Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born. 150
 Forward she started with a happy cry,
 And laid the feeble infant in his arms ;
 Whom Enoch took, and handled all his limbs,
 Appraised his weight and fondled fatherlike,
 But had no heart to break his purposes 155
 To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring had girt
 Her finger, Annie fought against his will :
 Yet nôt with brawling opposition she,
 But manifold entreaties, many a tear, 160
 Many a sad kiss by day or night renew'd
 (Sure that all evil would come out of it)
 Besought him, supplicating, if he cared
 For her or his dear children, not to go.
 He not for his own self caring but her, 165
 Her and her children, let her plead in vain ;
 So grieving held his will, and bore it thro.'

For Enoch parted with his old sea-friend,
 Bought Annie goods and stores, and set his hand
 To fit their little streetward sitting-room 170
 With shelf and corner for the goods and stores.
 So all day long till Enoch's last at home,
 Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and axe,

Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to hear
 Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd and rang 175
 Till this was ended, and his careful hand,—
 The space was narrow,—having order'd all
 Almost as neat and close as nature packs
 Her blossom or her seedling, paused ; and he,
 Who needs would work for Annie to the last, 180
 Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of farewell
 Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,
 Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to him.
 Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man 185
 Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery
 Where God-in-man is one with man-in-God,
 Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes
 Whatever came to him : and then he said
 ' Annie, this voyage by the grace of God 190
 Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
 Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for me,
 For I'll be back, my girl, before you know it.'
 Then lightly rocking baby's cradle 'and he,
 This pretty, puny, weakly little one,— 195
 Nay—for I love him all the better for it—
 God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees
 And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,
 And make him merry, when I come home again.
 Come Annie, come, cheer up before I go.' 200

Him running on thus hopefully she heard,
 And almost hoped herself ; but when he turn'd
 The current of his talk to greater things
 In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
 On providence and trust in Heaven, she heard, 205
 Heard and not heard him ; and as the village girl,

Who sets her pitcher underneath the spring,
 Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
 Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow.

At length she spoke 'O Enoch, you are wise ; 210
 And yet for all your wisdom well know I
 That I shall look upon your face no more.'

'Well then,' said Enoch, 'I shall look on yours.
 Annie, the ship I sail in passes here
 (He named the day) get you a seaman's glass, * 215
 Spy out my face, and laugh at all your fears.'

But when the last of those last moments came,
 'Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,
 Look to the babes, and till I come again,
 Keep everything shipshape, for I must go. 220
 And fear no more for me ; or if you fear
 Cast all your cares on God ; that anchor holds.
 Is He not yonder in those uttermost
 Parts of the morning ? if I flee to these
 Can I go from Him ? and the sea is His, 225
 The sea is His : He made it.'

Enoch rose,
 Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,
 And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones ;
 But for the third, the sickly one, who slept 230
 After a night of feverous wakefulness,
 When Annie would have raised him Enoch said
 'Wake him not ; let him sleep ; how should the child
 Remember this ?' and kiss'd him in his cot.
 But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt 235
 A tiny curl, and gave it : this he kept
 Thro' all his future ; but now hastily caught
 His bundle, waved his hand, and went his way.

She, when the day, that Enoch mention'd, came,
 Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain : perhaps 240
 She could not fix the glass to suit her eye ;
 Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous ;
 She saw him not : and while he stood on deck
 Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing sail 245
 She watch'd it, and departed weeping for him ;
 Then, tho' she mourned his absence as his grave,
 Set her sad will no less to chime with his,
 But throve not in her trade, not being bred
 To barter, nor compensating the want 250
 By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
 Nor asking overmuch and taking less,
 And still foreboding 'what would Enoch say ?'
 For more than once, in days of difficulty
 And pressure, had she sold her wares for less 255
 Than what she gave in buying what she sold :
 She failed and sadden'd knowing it ; and thus,
 Expectant of that news which never came,
 Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance,
 And lived a life of silent melancholy. 260

Now the third child was sickly-born and grew
 Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it
 With all a mother's care : nevertheless,
 Whether her business often called her from it,
 Or thro' the want of what it needed most, 265
 Or means to pay the voice who best could tell
 What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,
 After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—
 Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
 The little innocent soul flitted away. 270

In that same week when Annie buried it,
 Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace
 (Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her),
 Smote him, as having kept aloof so long.
 'Surely' said Philip 'I may see her now, 275
 May be some little comfort;' therefore went,
 Past thro' the solitary room in front,
 Paused for a moment at an inner door,
 Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
 Enter'd; but Annie, seated with her grief, 280
 Fresh from the burial of her little one,
 Cared not to look on any human face,
 But turn'd her own toward the wall and wept.
 Then Philip standing up said falteringly
 'Annie, I come to ask a favour of you.' 285

He spoke; the passion in her moan'd reply
 'Favour from one so sad and so forlorn
 As I am!' half abashed him; yet unask'd,
 His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
 He set himself beside her, saying to her: 290
 'I came to speak to you of what he wished,
 Enoch, your husband: I have ever said
 You chose the best among us—a strong man:
 For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'. 295
 And wherefore did he go this weary way,
 And leave you lonely? not to see the world—
 For pleasure?—nay, but for the wherewithal
 To give his babes a better bringing-up
 Than his had been, or yours: that was his wish. 300
 And if he come again, vext will he be
 To find the precious morning hours were lost.
 And it would vex him even in his grave,

If he could know his babes were running wild
 Like colts about the waste. So, Annie, now— 305
 Have we not known each other all our lives?
 I do beseech you by the love you bear
 Him and his children not to say me nay—
 For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
 Why then he shall repay me—if you will, 310
 Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.
 Now let me put the boy and girl to school:
 This is the favour that I came to ask.'

Then Annie with her brows against the wall
 Answer'd 'I cannot look you in the face; 315
 I seem so foolish and so broken down.
 When you came in my sorrow broke me down;
 And now I think your kindness breaks me down;
 But Enoch lives; that is borne in on me:
 He will repay you: money can be repaid; 320
 Not kindness such as yours.'

And Philip ask'd
 'Then you will let me, Annie?'

There she turn'd,
 She rose, and fixed her swimming eyes upon him, 325
 And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
 Then calling down a blessing on his head
 Caught at his hand, and wrung it passionately,
 And past into the little garth beyond.
 So lifted up in spirit he moved away. 330

Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
 And bought them needful books, and every way,
 Like one who does his duty by his own,
 Made himself theirs; and tho' for Annie's sake,
 Fearing the lazy gossip of the port, 335

He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
 And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
 Gifts by the children, garden herbs and fruit,
 The late and early roses from his wall,
 Or conies from the down, and now and then, 340
 With some pretext of fineness in the meal
 To save the offence of charitable, flour
 From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's mind :
 Scarce could the woman when he came upon her, 345
 Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
 Light on a broken word to thank him with.
 But Philip was her children's all-in-all ;
 From distant corners of the street they ran
 To greet his hearty welcome heartily ; 350
 Lords of his house and of his mill were they ;
 Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
 Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with him
 And call'd him Father Philip. Philip gain'd
 As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to them 355
 Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
 Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
 Down at the far end of an avenue,
 Going we know not where : and so ten years,
 Since Enoch left his hearth and native land, 360
 Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd
 To go with others, nutting to the wood,
 And Annie would go with them ; then they begg'd
 For Father Philip (as they call'd him) too : 365
 Him, like the working bee in blossom-dust,
 Blanch'd with his mill, they found ; and saying to him
 'Come with us father Philip' he denied ;

But when the children pluck'd at him to go,
He laugh'd and yielded readily to their wish, 370
For was not Annie with them? and they went.

But after scaling half the weary down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, all her force
Fail'd her; and sighing 'Let me rest' she said; 375
So Philip rested with her well-content;
While all the younger ones with jubilant cries
Broke from their elders, and tumultuously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made a plunge
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent or broke 380
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one dark hour 385
Here in this wood, when like a wounded life
He crept into the shadow: at last he said
Lifting his honest forehead, 'Listen, Annie,
How merry they are down yonder in the wood.'
'Tired, Annie?' for she did not speak a word. 390
'Tired?' but her face had fallen upon her hands;
At which as with a kind of anger in him,
'The ship was lost,' he said, 'the ship was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill yourself
And make them orphans quite?' And Annie said 395
'I thought not of it: but—I know not why—
Their voices make me feel so solitary.'

Then Philip coming somewhat closer spoke.
'Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long, 400

That tho' I know not when it first came there,
 I know that it will out at last. O Annie,
 It is beyond all hope, against all chance,
 That he who left you ten long years ago
 Should still be living; well then—let me speak : 405
 I grieve to see you poor and wanting help :
 I cannot help you as I wish to do
 Unless—they say that women are so quick—
 Perhaps you know what I would have you know—
 I wish you for my wife. I fain would prove 410
 A father to your children : I do think
 They love me as a father : I am sure
 That I love them as if they were mine own ;
 And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
 That after all these sad uncertain years, 415
 We might be still as happy as God grants
 To any of His creatures. Think upon it :
 For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,
 No burthen, save my care for you and yours :
 And we have known each other all our lives, 420
 And I have loved you longer than you know.'

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she spoke :
 ' You have been as God's good angel in our house.
 God bless you for it, God reward you for it,
 Philip, with something happier than myself. 425
 Can one love twice? can you be ever loved
 As Enoch was? what is it that you ask?'
 ' I am content ' he answer'd ' to be loved
 A little after Enoch.' ' O ' she cried
 Scared as it were ' dear Philip, wait a while : 430
 If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not come—
 Yet wait a year, a year is not so long :
 Surely I shall be wiser in a year :

O wait a little !' Philip sadly said
 'Annie, as I have waited all my life 435
 I well may wait a little.' 'Nay' she cried
 'I am bound : you have my promise—in a year :
 Will you not bide your year as I bide mine ?'
 And Philip answer'd 'I will bide my year.'

Here both were mute, till Philip glancing up 440
 Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day
 Pass from the Danish barrow overhead ;
 Then fearing night and chill for Annie, rose
 And sent his voice beneath him thro' the wood.
 Up came the children laden with their spoil ; 445
 Then all descended to the port, and there
 At Annie's door he paused and gave his hand,
 Saying gently 'Annie, when I spoke to you,
 That was your hour of weakness. I was wrong.
 I am always bound to you, but you are free.' 450
 Then Annie weeping answer'd 'I am bound.'

She spoke ; and in one moment as it were,
 While yet she went about her household ways,
 Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest words,
 That he had lov'd her longer than she knew, 455
 That autumn into autumn flash'd again,
 And there he stood once more before her face,
 Claiming her promise. 'Is it a year ?' she ask'd.
 'Yes, if the nuts' he said 'be ripe again :
 Come out and see.' But she—she put him off— 460
 So much to look to—such a change—a month—
 Give her a month—she knew that she was bound—
 A month—no more. Then Philip with his eyes
 Full of that lifelong hunger, and his voice
 Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand, 465
 'Take your own time, Annie, take your own time,'

And Annie could have wept for pity of him ;
 And yet she held him on delayingly
 With many a scarce-believable excuse,
 Trying his truth and his long-sufferance, 470
 Till half-another year had slipped away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
 Abhorrent of a calculation crost
 Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
 Some thought that Philip did but trifle with her ; 475
 Some that she but held off to draw him on ;
 And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,
 As simple folk that knew not their own minds ;
 And one, in whom all evil fancies clung
 Like serpents eggs together, laughingly 480
 Would hint at worse in either. Her own son
 Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish ;
 But evermore the daughter prest upon her
 To wed the man so dear to all of them
 And lift the household out of poverty ; 485
 And Philip's rosy face contracting grew
 Careworn and wan ; and all these things fell on her
 Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
 That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly 490
 Pray'd for a sign ' my Enoch is he gone ?'
 Then compass'd round by the blind wall of night
 Brook'd not the expectant terror of her heart,
 Started from bed, and struck herself a light,
 Then desperately seized the holy Book, 495
 Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
 Suddenly put her finger on the text,
 ' Under a palmtree.' That was nothing to her :
 No meaning there : she closed the Book and slept :

When lo! her Enoch sitting on a height, 500
 Under a palmtree, over him the Sun :
 'He is gone,' she thought, 'he is happy, he is singing
 Hosanna in the highest : yonder shines
 The Sun of Righteousness, and these be palms
 Whereof the happy people strowing cried 505
 "Hosanna in the highest!"' Here she woke,
 Resolved, sent for him and said wildly to him
 'There is no reason why we should not wed.'
 'Then for God's sake,' he answer'd, 'both our sakes,
 So you will wed me, let it be at once.' 510

So these were wed and merrily rang the bells,
 Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.
 But never merrily beat Annie's heart.
 A footstep seem'd to fall beside her path,
 She knew not whence ; a whisper on her ear, 515
 She knew not what ; nor loved she to be left
 Alone at home nor ventured out alone.
 What ail'd her then, that ere she enter'd, often
 Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,
 Fearing to enter : Philip thought he knew : 520
 Such doubts and fears were common to her state,
 Being with child : but when her child was born,
 Then her new child was as herself renew'd,
 Then the new mother came about her heart,
 Then her good Philip was her all-in-all, 525
 And that myster'ous instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch ? prosperously sail'd
 The ship 'Good Fortune,' tho' at setting forth
 The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward, shook
 And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unvext 530
 She slipt across the summer of the world,
 Then after a long tumble about the Cape

And frequent interchange of foul and fair,
She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of heaven came continually 535
And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and bought
Quaint monsters for the market of those times,
A gilded dragon also for the babes. 540

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first indeed
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her bows :
Then follow'd calms, and then winds variable, 545
Then baffling, a long course of them ; and last
Storm, such as drove her under moonless heavens
Till hard upon the cry of ' breakers ' came
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
But Enoch and two others. Half the night, 550
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken spars,
These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots ; 555
Nor save for pity was it hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of palm, a hut,
Half hut, half native cavern. So the three, 560
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-content.

For one, the youngest, hardly more than boy,
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and wreck,

Lay lingering out a three years' death-in-life. 565
 They could not leave him. After he was gone,
 The two remaining found a fallen stem ;
 And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
 Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell
 Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone. 570
 In those two deaths he read God's warning ' wait.'

— The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns
 And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,
 The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,
 The lightning flash of insect and of bird, 575
 The lustre of the long convolvuluses
 That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran
 Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
 And glories of the broad belt of the world,
 All these he saw ; but what he fain had seen 580
 He could not see, the kindly human face,
 Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
 The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
 The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
 The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd 585
 And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
 Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
 As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
 Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
 A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail : 590
 No sail from day to day, but every day
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
 Among the palms and ferns and precipices ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the east ;
 The blaze upon his island overhead ; 595
 The blaze upon the waters to the west ;
 Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,

The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch, 600
So still, the golden lizard on him paused,
A phantom made of many phantoms moved
Before him haunting him, or he himself
Moved haunting people, things and places, known
Far in a darker isle beyond the line; 605
The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill
November dawns and dewy-gloomings downs, 610
The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,
And the low moan of leaden-colour'd seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
Tho' faintly, merrily—far and far away—
He heard the pealing of his parish bells; 615
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up
Shuddering, and when the beauteous hateful isle
Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart
Spoken with That, which being everywhere
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone, 620
Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head
The sunny and rainy seasons came and went
Year after year. His hopes to see his own,
And pace the sacred old familiar fields, 625
Not yet had perished, when his lonely doom
Came suddenly to an end. Another ship
(She wanted water) blown by baffling winds,
Like the Good Fortune, from her destined course,

Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay : 630
 For since the mate had seen at early dawn
 Across a break on the mist-wreathen isle
 The silent water slipping from the hills,
 They sent a crew that landing burst away
 In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores 635
 With clamour. Downward from his mountain gorge
 Stept the long-hair'd, long-bearded solitary,
 Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,
 Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike it seem'd,
 With inarticulate rage, and making signs 640
 They knew not what : and yet he led the way
 To where the rivulets of sweet water ran ;
 And ever as he mingled with the crew,
 And heard them talking, his long-bounden tongue
 Was loosen'd, till he made them understand ; 645
 Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took aboard :
 And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
 Scarce credited at first but more and more,
 Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it :
 And clothes they gave him and free passage home ; 650
 But oft he work'd among the rest and shook
 His isolation from him. None of these
 Came from his county, or could answer him,
 If question'd, aught of what he cared to know.
 And dull the voyage was with long delays, 655
 The vessel scarce sea-worthy ; but evermore
 His fancy fled before the lazy wind
 Returning, till beneath a clouded moon
 He like a lover down thro' all his blood
 Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-breath 660
 Of England, blown across her ghostly wall :
 And that same morning officers and men
 Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,

Pitying the lonely man and gave him it :
 Then moving up the coast they landed him, 665
 Ev'n in that harbour whence he sail'd before.

There Enoch spoke no word to anyone,
 But homeward—home—what home? had he a home?
 His home, he walk'd. Bright was that afternoon,
 Sunny but chill ; till drawn thro' either chasm, 670
 Where either haven open'd on the deeps,
 Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world in gray ;
 Cut off the length of highway on before,
 And left but narrow breadth to left and right
 Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage. 675
 On the nigh-naked tree the robin piped
 Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
 The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it down :
 Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom ;
 Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light 680
 Flared on him, and he came upon the place.

Then down the long street having slowly stolen,
 His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
 His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd the home
 Where Annie lived and loved him, and his babes 685
 In those far-off seven happy years were born ;
 But finding neither light nor murmur there
 (A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle) crept
 Still downward thinking 'dead or dead to me!'

Down to the pool and narrow wharf he went, 690
 Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
 A front of timber-crost antiquity,
 So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
 He thought it must have gone ; but he was gone
 Who kept it ; and his widow, Miriam Lane, 695

With daily-dwindling profits held the house ;
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Still, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garrulous, 700
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him with other annals of the port,
Not knowing—Enoch was so brown, so bow'd
So broken—all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty, 705
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the birth
Of Philip's child : and o'er his countenance
No shadow past, nor motion : anyone, 710
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale
Less than the teller : only when she closed
'Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost'
He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
Repeated muttering 'cast away and lost ;' 715
Again in deeper inward whispers 'lost !'

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face again ;
'If I might look on her sweet face again
And know that she is happy.' So the thought
Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him forth, 720
At evening when the dull November day
Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.
There he sat down gazing on all below ;
There did a thousand memories roll upon him,
Unspeakable for sadness. By and by 725
The ruddy square of comfortable light,
Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,
Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures

The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
Against it, and beats out his weary life. 730

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,
The latest house to landward ; but behind,
With one small gate that open'd on the waste,
Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd :
And in it throve an ancient evergreen, 735
A yewtree, and all around it ran a walk
Of shingle, and a walk divided it
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole
Up by the wall, behind the yew ; and thence
That which he better might have shunn'd, if griefs 740
Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board
Sparkled and shone ; so genial was the hearth :
And on the right hand of the hearth he saw
Philip, the slighted suitor of old times, 745
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees ;
And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,
A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted hand
Dangl'd a length of ribbon and a ring 750
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy arms,
Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they laugh'd :
And on the left hand of the hearth he saw
The mother glancing often toward her babe,
But turning now and then to speak with him, 755
Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,
And saying that which pleased him, for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life beheld
His wife his wife no more, and saw the babe
Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee, 760

And all the warmth, the peace, the happiness,
 And his own children tall and beautiful,
 And him, that other, reigning in his place,
 Lord of his rights and of his children's love,—
 Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him all, 765
 Because things seen are mightier than things heard,
 Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch, and fear'd
 To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,
 Which in one moment, like the blast of doom,
 Would shatter all the happiness of the hearth. 770

He therefore turning softly like a thief,
 Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,
 And feeling all along the garden-wall,
 Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,
 Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed, 775
 As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
 Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that his knees
 Were feeble, so that falling prone he dug
 His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd. 780

'Too hard to bear! why did they take me thence?
 O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou
 That did'st uphold me on my lonely isle,
 Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
 A little longer! aid me, give me strength 785
 Not to tell her, never to let her know.
 Help me not to break in upon her peace.
 My children too! must I not speak to these?
 They know me not. I should betray myself.
 Never: no father's kiss for me—the girl 790
 So like her mother, and the boy, my son.'

There speech and thought and nature fail'd a little,
 And he lay tranced ; but when he rose and paced
 Back toward his solitary home again,
 All down the long and narrow street he went 795
 Beating it in upon his weary brain,
 As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
 'Not to tell her, never to let her know.'

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
 Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore 800
 Prayer from the living source within the will.
 And beating up thro' all the bitter world,
 Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
 Kept him a living soul. 'This miller's wife'
 He said to Miriam 'that you told me of, 805
 Has she no fear that her first husband lives?'
 'Ay, ay, poor soul' said Miriam, 'fear enow !
 If you could tell her you had seen him dead,
 Why, that would be her comfort ;' and he thought
 'After the Lord has call'd me she shall know, 810
 I wait his time' and Enoch set himself,
 Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.
 Almost to all things could he turn his hand.
 Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought
 To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd 815
 At lading and unlading the tall barks,
 That brought the stinted commerce of those days ;
 Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself :
 Yet since he did but labour for himself,
 Work without hope, there was not life in it 820
 Whereby the man could live ; and as the year
 Roll'd itself round again to meet the day
 When Enoch had return'd, a languor came
 Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually

Weakening the man, till he could do no more, 825
 But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.
 And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.
 For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck
 See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall
 The boat that bears the hope of life approach 830
 To save the life despair'd of, than he saw
 Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope
 On Enoch thinking 'after I am gone,
 Then may she learn I loved her to the last.' 835
 He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said
 'Woman, I have a secret—only swear,
 Before I tell you—swear upon the book
 Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.'
 'Dead,' clamour'd the good woman, 'hear him talk! 840
 I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round.'
 'Swear' added Enoch sternly 'on the book.'
 And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.
 Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,
 'Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?' 845
 'Know him?' she said 'I knew him far away.
 Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street;
 Held his head high, and cared for no man, he.'
 Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;
 'His head is low, and no man cares for him. 850
 I think I have not three days more to live;
 I am the man.' At which the woman gave
 A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.
 'You Arden, you! nay,—sure he was a foot
 Higher than you be.' Enoch said again 855
 'My God has bow'd me down to what I am;
 My grief and solitude have broken me;

Nevertheless, know you that I am he
Who married—but that name has twice been changed—
I married her who married Philip Ray. 860
Sit, listen.' Then he told her of his voyage,
His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears, 865
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly
To rush abroad all round the little haven,
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes ;
But awed and promise-bounden she forebore,
Saying only 'See your bairns before you go ! 870
Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden,' and arose
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung
A moment on her words, but then replied :
'Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
But let me hold my purpose till I die. 875
Sit down again ; mark me and understand,
While I have power to speak. I charge you now,
When you shall see her, tell her that I died
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her ;
Save for the bar between us, loving her 880
As when she laid her head beside my own.
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
So like her mother, that my latest breath
Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.
And tell my son that I died blessing him. 885
And say to Philip that I blest him too ;
He never meant us any thing but good.
But if my children care to see me dead,
Who hardly knew me living, let them come,
I am their father ; but she must not come, 890
For my dead face would vex her after-life.

And now there is but one of all my blood,
 Who will embrace me in the world-to-be :
 This hair is his : she cut it off and gave it,
 And I have borne it with me all these years, 895
 And thought to bear it with me to my grave ;
 But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,
 My babe in bliss : wherefore when I am gone,
 Take, give her this, for it may comfort her :
 It will moreover be a token to her, 900
 That I am he.'

He ceased ; and Miriam Lane
 Made such a voluble answer promising all,
 That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her
 Repeating all he wish'd, and once again 905
 She promised.

Then the third night after this,
 While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,
 And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,
 There came so loud a calling of the sea, 910
 That all the houses in the haven rang.
 He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad
 Crying with a loud voice ' a sail ! a sail !
 I am saved ' ; and so fell back and spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away. 915
 And when they buried him the little port
 Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO ———.

I.

Thou who stealest fire,
 From the fountains of the past,
 To glorify the present ; oh, haste,
 Visit my low desire !
 Strengthen me, enlighten me ! 5
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory. λ

II.

Come not as thou camest of late,
 Flinging the gloom of yesternight
 On the white day ; but robed in soften'd light 10
 Of orient state.
 Whilome thou camest with the morning mist,
 Even as a maid, whose stately brow
 The dew-impearled winds of dawn have kiss'd,
 When, she, as thou, 15
 Stays on her floating locks the lovely freight
 Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots
 Of orient green, giving safe pledge of fruits,
 Which in wintertide shall star
 The black earth with brilliance rare. 20

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning mist,
 And with the evening cloud,
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my open breast
 (Those peerless flowers which in the rudest wind
 Never grow sere, 25
 When rooted in the garden of the mind,

Because they are the earliest of the year).

Nor was the night thy shroud.

In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest

Thou leddest by the hand thine infant Hope.

30

The eddying of her garments caught from thee

The light of thy great presence ; and the cope

Of the half-attain'd futurity,

Tho' deep not fathomless,

Was cloven with the million stars which tremble

35

O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.

Small thought was there of life's distress ;

For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could dull

Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and beautiful :

Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,

40

Listening the lordly music flowing from

The illimitable years.

O strengthen me, enlighten me !

I faint in this obscurity,

Thou dewy dawn of memory.

45

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,

Thou of the many tongues, the myriad eyes !

Thou comest not with shows of flaunting vines

Unto mine inner eye,

Divinest Memory !

50

Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall

Which ever sounds and shines

A pillar of white light upon the wall

Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :

Come from the woods that belt the gray hill-side,

55

The seven elms, the poplars four

That stand beside my father's door,

And chiefly from the brook that loves

To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
 Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves, 60
 Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
 In every elbow and turn,
 The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland,
 O! hither lead thy feet!
 Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat 65
 Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled folds,
 Upon the ridged wolds,
 When the first matin-song hath waken'd loud
 Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
 What time the amber morn 70
 Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung cloud.

v.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye
 To the young spirit present
 When first she is wed;
 And like a bride of old 75
 In triumph led,
 With music and sweet showers
 Of festal flowers,
 Unto the dwelling she must sway.
 Well hast thou done, great artist Memory, 80
 In setting round thy first experiment
 With royal frame-work of wrought gold;
 Needs must thou dearly love thy first essay,
 And foremost in thy various gallery
 Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls 85
 Upon the storied walls;
 For the discovery
 And newness of thine art so pleased thee,
 That all which thou hast drawn of fairest
 Or boldest since, but lightly weighs 90
 With thee unto the love thou bearest

The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,
 Ever retiring thou dost gaze
 On the prime labour of thine early days :
 No matter what the sketch might be ; 95

Whether the high field on the bushless Pike,
 Or even a sand-built ridge
 Of heaped hills that mound the sea,
 Overblown with murmurs harsh,
 Or even a lowly cottage whence we see 100

Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enormous marsh,
 Where from the frequent bridge,
 Like emblems of infinity,
 The trenched waters run from sky to sky ;

Or a garden bower'd close 105

With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
 Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,
 Or opening upon level plots
 Of crowned lilies, standing near
 Purple-spiked lavender : 110

Whither in after life retired
 From brawling storms,
 From weary wind,
 With youthful fancy re-inspired,
 We may hold converse with all forms 115

Of the many-sided mind,
 And those whom passion hath not blinded,
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,
 Were how much better than to own 120
 A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !

O strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

The plain was grassy, wild and bare,
 Wide, wild, and open to the air,
 Which had built up everywhere
 An under-roof of doleful gray.
 With an inner voice the river ran, 5
 Adown it floated a dying swan,
 And loudly did lament.
 It was the middle of the day.
 Ever the weary wind went on,
 And took the reed-tops as it went. 10

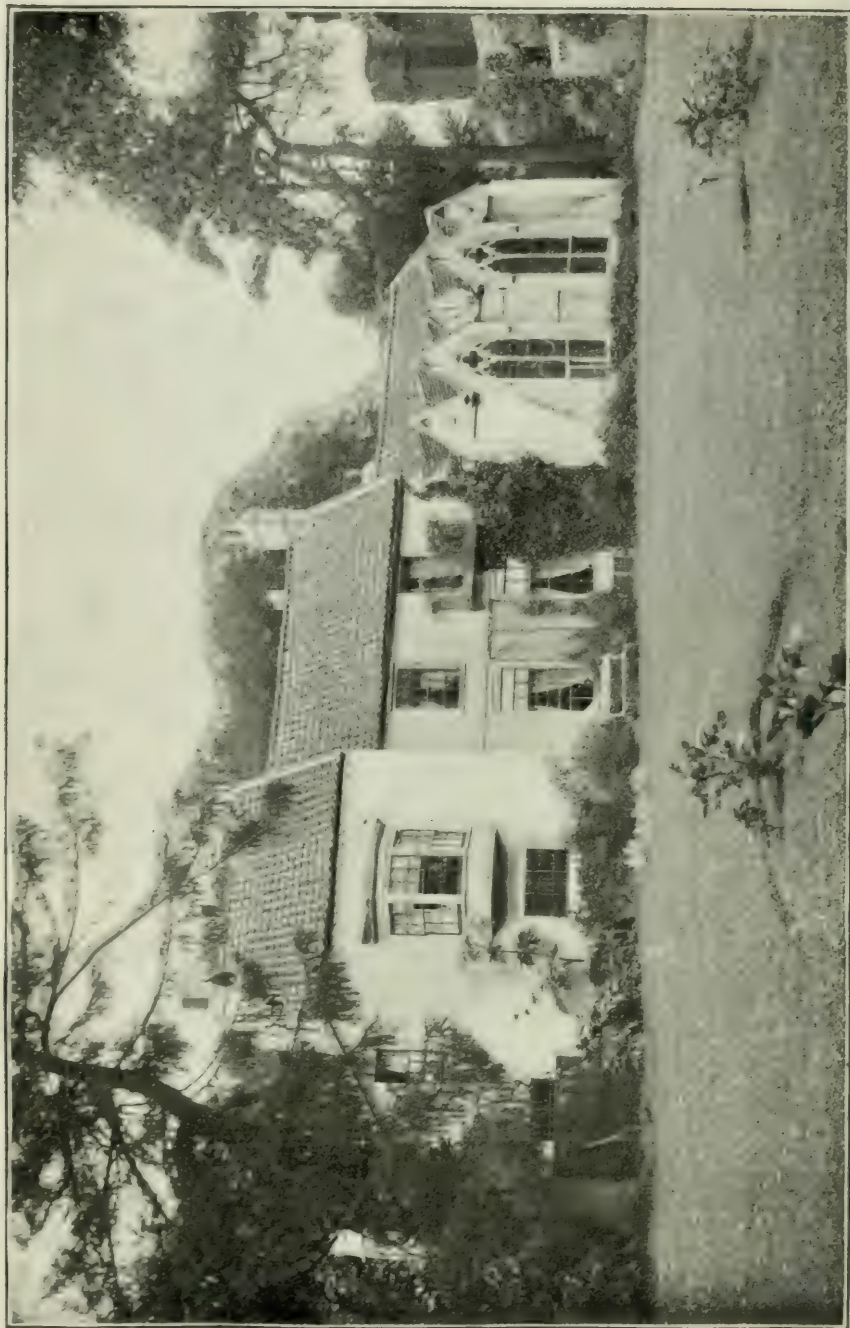
II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
 And white against the cold-white sky,
 Shone out their crowning snows.
 One willow over the river wept,
 And shook the wave as the wind did sigh ; 15
 Above in the wind was the swallow,
 Chasing itself at it own wild will,
 And far thro' the marish green and still
 The tangled water-courses slept
 Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow. 20

III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul
 Of that waste place with joy
 Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear
 The warble was low, and full and clear ;
 And floating about the under-sky, 25
 Prevailing in weakness, the coronach stole
 Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;

But anon her awful jubilant voice,
With a music strange and manifold,
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ; 30
As when a mighty people rejoice
With shawms, and with cymbals, and harps of gold,
And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd
Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
To the shepherd who watcheth the evening star. 35
And the creeping mosses and clambering weeds,
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
And the wavy swell of the souging reeds,
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
And the silvery marish-flowers that throng 40
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.



Somersby Rectory (Tennyson's Early Home)

NOTES ON TENNYSON.

ALFRED TENNYSON was the third son of the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson, rector of Somersby, a small village in Lincolnshire not far from the sea-coast. Though in the neighbourhood of the fen country, Somersby itself lies "in a pretty pastoral district of sloping hills and large ash trees." "To the north rises the long peak of the wold, with its steep white road that climbs the hill above Thetford; to the south, the land slopes gently to a small deep-channelled brook, which rises not far from Somersby and flows just below the parsonage garden." The scenery of his native village and its neighbourhood, where he spent his youth and early manhood,—the scenery of wold, and fen, and sandy coast—made a deep impress on the poet's mind, and is reflected again and again in his earlier writings. In the parsonage of Somersby, which was then the only considerable house in the little hamlet, Alfred was born August 6th, 1809. His father was a man of ability, with intellectual and artistic interests; books were at hand, and the three elder boys not only became great readers, but from childhood were accustomed to write original verses. The life of the Tennysons was a somewhat secluded one; Alfred was naturally shy, with a bent towards solitary and imaginative pursuits. These tendencies may have been fostered by the character of his early education. He was not sent to a great public school, like most English boys of his class, but attended the village school at Somersby, then the grammar school at the neighbouring town of Louth, and was finally prepared for entering college by home tuition. Already before he had become an undergraduate, he was an author, having, along with his elder brother Charles, written a volume entitled *Poems by Two Brothers*, which was published at Louth in 1827 by a local bookseller. The work is creditable to such youthful poets (the poems contributed by Alfred were composed between his fifteenth and his seventeenth year), but more remarkable for the absence of marked immaturity than for the presence of positive merits. The breadth of the authors' reading is attested by quotations prefixed to the various pieces: Cicero, Ovid, Virgil, Terence, Lucretius, Sallust, Tacitus, Byron, Cowper, Gray, Hume, Moore, Scott, Beattie and Addison being all put under contribution.

In 1828 Charles and Alfred entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where the eldest brother, Frederick, was already a student. There the Tenny-

sons were associated with some of the most brilliant and promising of their contemporaries. Alfred formed an especially warm friendship with Arthur Henry Hallam, a young man of extraordinary endowments, whose premature death he subsequently commemorated in *In Memoriam*. In 1829 Tennyson won the Chancellor's prize for English verse by a poem on "Timbuctoo," where for the first time in his work, there is some promise of future excellence, and some faint touches of his later style. Next year his poetic career may be said really to have begun with a small volume entitled *Poems Chiefly Lyrical*, which in such poems as *Claribel*, *The Dying Swan*, *Mariana*, and *The Poet*, clearly exhibits some of his characteristic qualities. The volume was favourably reviewed by Leigh Hunt and Hallam, but severely criticized by "Christopher North" in *Blackwood*. In the same year the author embarked on a very different undertaking, going with Hallam to Spain in order to carry, to the revolutionists there, money and letters from English sympathizers. In 1831 his college career was brought to a close by the death of his father, and he returned to Somersby. Here he completed a second volume of poems, published in 1832. This marks another advance in poetic art, and contains some of his most characteristic pieces: *The Lady of Shalott*, *Oenone*, *The Palace of Art*, *The Miller's Daughter*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, *The Two Voices*. It should be remembered, however, that several of these do not now appear in their original form, and that much of their perfection is due to revisions later than 1832. This volume, as well as its predecessor, was severely criticized, especially by the *Quarterly*. But although in this article justice was not done to the merits of the volume, the strictures upon defects were in the main well grounded, as the poet himself tacitly acknowledged by omitting or amending in subsequent editions the objectionable passages. Another result of the hostility of the critics was that Tennyson, who was always morbidly sensitive to criticism even from the most friendly source, ceased publishing for almost ten years, except that verses from his pen occasionally appeared in the pages of Literary Annuals. This ten-years silence is characteristic of the man, of his self-restraint and power of patient application—potent factors in the ultimate perfection of his work.

The sudden death of his friend Hallam, in September 1833, plunged Tennyson for a time in profound sorrow, but was doubtless effective in maturing and deepening his emotional and intellectual life. The poet's sister had been betrothed to Hallam; over the household at Somersby, of which Alfred, in the absence of his elder brothers,

was now the head, there gathered a deep gloom. The feelings and ideas which centred about this great sorrow of his youthful days, the poet soon began to embody in short lyrics; these through successive years grew in number and variety, and finally took shape in what by many is considered Tennyson's greatest work, *In Memoriam*.

It was in 1836, when Charles Tennyson was married to Louisa Sellwood, that in all probability Alfred fell in love with the bride's sister, to whom, in course of time he became engaged. The small fortune which he had inherited was insufficient to provide a maintenance for a married pair; poetry, to which he had devoted his life, seemed unlikely ever to yield him a sufficient income. Yet, characteristically enough, Tennyson neither attempted to find a more lucrative profession, nor even departed from his resolve to refrain from again seeking public notice until his genius and his work had become fully matured. In consequence, the friends of his betrothed put an end to the correspondence of the lovers; and a long period of trial began for the poet, when his prospects in love, in worldly fortune, in poetic success, seemed almost hopelessly overcast. In 1837 the family removed from Somersby to High Beech in Epping Forest, then to Tunbridge Wells, and then to the neighbourhood of Maidstone. The change of residence brought Tennyson into closer proximity with the capital, and henceforward, he frequently resorted thither to visit old friends like Spedding, and gradually became personally known in the literary circles of London. Among other notable men he met with Carlyle, found pleasure in the company of this uncouth genius and his clever wife, and, in turn, was regarded with unusual favour by a keen-eyed and censorious pair of critics. Tennyson was one of the very few distinguished men whose personality impressed Carlyle favourably. The account which the latter gives of Tennyson in a letter to Emerson, dated August 1844, is worth quoting at length:—

“Moxon informs me that Tennyson is now in Town, and means to come and see me. Of this latter result I shall be very glad. Alfred is one of the few British and Foreign Figures (a not increasing number, I think!) who are and remain beautiful to me—a true human soul, or some authentic approximation thereto, to whom your own soul can say, Brother! However, I doubt he will not come; he often skips me in these brief visits to Town; skips everybody, indeed; being a man solitary and sad, as certain men are, dwelling in an element of gloom,—carrying a bit of chaos about him, in short, which he is manufacturing into Cosmos. Alfred is the son of a Lincolnshire Gentleman Farmer, I think; indeed you see in his verses that he is a native of ‘moated granges,’ and green flat pastures, not of mountains and their torrents and storms. He had his breeding at Cambridge, as for the Law or Church; being master of a small annuity on his Father's decease, he preferred clubbing with his Mother and some

Sisters, to live unpromoted and write poems. In this way he lives still, now here, now there ; the family always within reach of London, never in it ; he himself making rare and brief visits, lodging in some old comrade's rooms. I think he must be under forty—not much under it. One of the finest-looking men in the world. A great shock of rough, dusty-dark hair ; bright, laughing, hazel eyes ; massive aquiline face, most massive yet most delicate ; of sallow-brown complexion, almost Indian-looking ; clothes cynically loose, free-and-easy ; smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musical metallic—fit for loud laughter and piercing wail, and all that may lie between ; speech and speculation free and plenteous : I do not meet, in these late decades, such company over a pipe ! We shall see what he will grow to. He is often unwell ; very chaotic—his way is through Chaos and the Bottomless and Pathless ; not handy for making out many miles upon."

Meanwhile, in 1842, two years before this letter was written, Tennyson gave conclusive evidence of the power that was in him, by the publication of two volumes containing, in the first place, a selection from the poems of 1830 and of 1832, and, secondly, a large number of new pieces. Among the latter are *Morte d'Arthur*, *Ulysses*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *The Talking Oak*, *Locksley Hall*, *Dora*, *St. Simeon Stylites*, *St. Agnes' Eve*, "Break, break, break," and the three poems "You ask me why," "Of old sat Freedom," "Love thou thy land." Such pieces as these represent the mature art of their author, and some of them he never surpassed. It was about the time of the publication of these volumes that the fortunes of their author reached their lowest point. The failure of a manufacturing scheme in which he had invested all his means left him penniless. "Then followed," says his son and biographer, "a season of real hardship, and many trials for my father and mother, since marriage seemed to be further off than ever. So severe a hypochondria set in upon him that his friends despaired of his life. 'I have,' he writes, 'drunk one of those most bitter draughts out of the cup of life, which go near to make men hate the world they live in.'" But, at length, the fates became propitious. In the first place the excellence of the collected poems of 1842 rapidly won general recognition ; during his ten years of silence Tennyson's reputation had been steadily growing, the two volumes of 1842 set it upon a firm basis. From that day to this, he has held the first place in general estimation among contemporary poets. In 1845 Wordsworth pronounced him "decidedly the first of our living poets" ; in the same year the fourth edition of the *Poems* of 1842 was called for, and the publisher, Moxon, said that Tennyson was the only poet by the publication of whose works he had not been a loser. Further, in 1845, the prime minister, Sir Robert Peel, through the intervention of Tennyson's old college friend Milnes (Lord Houghton), conferred upon him a pension of £200

a year. This was a timely relief to pecuniary difficulties which were at this date very embarrassing. *The Princess*, his first long work, was published in 1847. Through a fanciful story of a Princess who founds a university for women, it gave a poetical presentation and solution of the 'woman question'; but rather disappointed, at the time, the high expectations excited by the earlier writings. On the other hand, *In Memoriam*, which appeared in 1850, has from the beginning been considered one of the finest products of his genius. It consists of a series of lyrics giving utterance to various moods and thoughts to which the great sorrow of his youth had given birth. These had been carefully elaborated during a long period, are extraordinarily finished in their expression and are fuller of substance than any other of the more ambitious works of their author. No other poem so adequately represents the current thought and average attitude of Tennyson's generation in regard to many of the great problems of the time. In the year of the publication of *In Memoriam*, the laureateship, rendered vacant by the death of Wordsworth, was bestowed upon its author. In the same year his marriage with Emily Sellwood took place. They had been separated from one another for ten years; Tennyson's age was forty-one, the bride's thirty-seven. But their fidelity was rewarded. "The peace of God," Tennyson said, "came into my life before the altar when I married her"; and indeed the remainder of the poet's long life, apart from the death in the first years of manhood of his second son, is a record of happiness and success such as does not fall to the lot of many men.

After a tour in Italy the Tennysons in 1853 took up their residence at Farringford, in the Isle of Wight, which was henceforth their home, and the poet entered upon a period of sure and increasing popularity and growing worldly prosperity. He never relaxed, however, even in advanced old age, his strenuous poetic industry; hence a long series of works of a high order of merit, of which we will mention only the more important. In 1855, *Maud*, a lyrical monodrama, was published, about which critical opinion was then and still remains greatly divided, though the poet himself regarded it with special favour. In 1857, Bayard Taylor visited Tennyson at his home and records his impressions: "He is tall and broad-shouldered as a son of Anak, with hair, beard, and eyes of Southern darkness. Something in the lofty brow and aquiline nose suggests Dante, but such a deep, mellow chest-voice never could have come from Italian lungs. He proposed a walk, as the day was wonderfully clear and beautiful. We climbed the steep comb

of the chalk cliff, and slowly wandered westward until we reached the Needles, at the extremity of the Island, and some three or four miles distant from his residence. During the conversation with which we beguiled the way, I was struck with the variety of his knowledge. Not a little flower on the downs, which the sheep had spared, escaped his notice, and the geology of the coast, both terrestrial and submarine, were perfectly familiar to him. I thought of a remark that I had once heard from the lips of a distinguished English author [Thackeray] that Tennyson was the wisest man he knew."

Tennyson, as such poems as *The Lady of Shalott* and *Morte d'Arthur* show, had been early attracted by the legendary tales of King Arthur, which to several poets had seemed a rich storehouse of poetical material. About the year 1857 he began to occupy himself specially with these legends; and from this time on until the middle seventies his chief energy was given to the composition of a series of poems from these sources, which were ultimately arranged to form a composite whole, entitled the *Idylls of the King*. These poems proved very acceptable to the general taste, and the poet began to reap a fortune from the sale of his works. Of the volume published in 1862, entitled *Enoch Arden*, which mainly consisted of English Idyls, sixty thousand copies were rapidly sold. This, perhaps, marks the height of his popularity.

In 1875 he entered on a new field with the publication of an historical drama, *Queen Mary*, followed in 1876 by a similar work, *Harold*, and by other dramatic pieces in later years. In the drama Tennyson was less successful than in any other department which he attempted, and this lack of success gave rise to a widespread feeling that his powers were now in decline. Such a conclusion was most decisively negatived by the appearance of *Ballads and Other Poems* in 1880, where he returned to less ambitious and lengthy but more congenial forms—a collection which Mr. Theodore Watts terms "the most richly various volume of English verse that has appeared in [Tennyson's] century." At intervals until the very close of his long life, he produced similar miscellaneous collections of poems: *Tiresias and Other Poems*, 1885, *Demeter and Other Poems*,* 1889, *The Death of Oenone and Other Poems*, 1892. Some of the pieces contained in these miscellanies were doubtless the gleanings of earlier years; but in others there were qualities which clearly showed them to be the

* Twenty thousand copies of this book were sold within a week.

products of a new epoch in a genius that went on changing and developing even in advanced old age. In the most characteristic pieces, *The Revenge*, *The Relief of Lucknow*, *Rizpah*, *Vastness*, etc., there is a vigour and dramatic force absent in his earlier work, with less of that minute finish and elaborate perfection of phrase which is so often his chief merit. On the other hand, in *Freedom*, *To Virgil*, and *Crossing the Bar*, we have poems in the more familiar Tennysonian style, not a whit inferior to similar compositions in the volumes of his prime. In 1884 Tennyson was raised to the peerage as Baron of Aldworth and Farringford. The first part of his title was derived from a second residence which he had built for himself in Surrey, choosing a very retired situation in order that he might escape the idle curiosity of tourists. In 1886, the second great sorrow of his life befell Tennyson; his younger son, Lionel, died on the return voyage from India, where he had contracted a fever.

To Tennyson's continued mental vigour in advanced old age, his works bear testimony; his bodily strength was also little abated. "At eighty-two," his son reports, "my father preserved the high spirits of youth. He would defy his friends to get up twenty times quickly from a low chair without touching it with their hands while he was performing this feat himself, and one afternoon he had a long waltz with M—— in the ball room." This vigour was maintained almost to the very close of his long life. It was the sixth of October, 1892, when the great poet breathed his last. "Nothing could have been more striking than the scene during the last few hours," writes his medical attendant. "On the bed a figure of breathing marble, flooded and bathed in the light of the full moon streaming through the oriel window; his hand clasping the Shakespeare which he had asked for but recently, and which he had kept by him to the end; the moonlight, the majestic figure as he lay there, 'drawing thicker breath,' irresistibly brought to our minds his own 'Passing of Arthur.'" "Some friends and servants came to see him. He looked very grand and peaceful with the deep furrows of thought almost smoothed away, and the old clergyman of Lurgashall stood by the bed with his hands raised, and said, 'Lord Tennyson, God has taken you, who made you a prince of men. Farewell!'"

Some personal peculiarities may be added. Although so accurate an observer of nature, Tennyson was very short-sighted. He was subject to fits of intense abstraction similar to those recorded of Socrates. He said to Mr. Knowles: "Sometimes as I sit here alone in this great

room I get carried away out of sense and body, and rapt into mere existence, till the accidental touch or movement of one of my own fingers is like a great shock and blow and brings the body back with a terrible start." *

He was accustomed to compose single lines or isolated passages, and to note down images and natural details which he preserved and would subsequently incorporate in his poems. At page 465 of the first volume of the *Life*, his biographer gives a number of these which had been gathered during various tours, *e.g.*,

"As those that lie on happy shores and see
Thro' the near blossom slip the distant sail."

"Ledges of battling water."

"A cow drinking from a trough on the hill-side. The netted beams of light played or the wrinkles of her throat."

"His reading was always in a grand, deep, measured voice, and was rather intoning in a few notes than speaking. It was like a sort of musical thunder, far off or near—loud rolling or 'sweet and low'—according to the subject, and once heard could never be forgotten" (Knowles). Miss Thackeray (Mrs. Ritchie) confirms this, describing it as "a sort of mystical incantation, a chant in which every note rises and falls and reverberates again." But some who heard him complain that his reading was so inarticulate as to be scarcely intelligible.

"His acquaintance with all previous poetry was unlimited and his memory amazing" (Knowles).

Mrs. Oliphant, in her Autobiography, giving an account of a visit, says: "I have always thought that Tennyson's appearance was too emphatically that of a poet, especially in his photographs: the fine frenzy, the careless picturesqueness were almost too much. He looked the part too well: but in reality there was a roughness and acrid gloom about the man which saved him from his over-romantic appearance.

. . . The conversation turned somehow upon his little play of 'The Falcon.' . . . I said something about its beauty, and that I thought it just the kind of entertainment which a gracious prince might offer to his guests; and he replied with a sort of indignant sense of grievance, 'And they tell me people won't go to see it.'"

His ideas in regard to 'the great problems' seem to have varied from time to time. The Rev. Doctor Gatty recorus: "Many years ago I

* Compare *In Memoriam*, xcv, and the trances of the Prince in *The Princess*. In reference to the former passage he said: "I've often a strange feeling of being wound and wrapped in the Great Soul."

had a conversation with the poet in his attic study at Farringford, that lasted till nearly day-break. He discoursed on many subjects, and when we touched on religion, he said, 'I am not very fond of creeds: it is enough for me to know that God Himself came down from heaven in the form of man.'"* "This is a terrible age of unfaith," he would say. "I hate utter unfaith, I cannot endure that men should sacrifice everything at the cold altar of what with their imperfect knowledge they choose to call truth and reason. One can easily lose all belief, through giving up the continual thought and care for spiritual things." He was always greatly interested in the question of a future life and clung passionately to the belief in a personal immortality. "Yes, it is true," he said in January, 1869, "that there are moments when the flesh is nothing to me, when I feel and know the flesh to be the vision, God and the spiritual the only real and true. Depend upon it, the Spiritual is the real: it belongs to me more than the hand and the foot." Mr. Knowles reports that, in conversation with him, Tennyson formulated his creed thus: "There's a Something that watches over us; and our individuality endures: that's my faith, and that's all my faith." "My greatest wish," he once said, "is to have a clearer vision of God."

General Characteristics.

Tennyson's Success.—Tennyson's poetic career was an unusually long one, extending as it did over more than sixty years, and during all that time there was no marked decadence of power such as has been so often manifest in the later work of imaginative writers. Very early in that career he was successful in winning the highest position in popular estimation, and may be said to have maintained it steadily until the end. The partial eclipse of his fame during the seventies was due rather to his employing his powers in the uncongenial sphere of the drama, than to any actual decay of force. It must be further noted that Tennyson's work was not merely esteemed, it was *read*—and that not by a clique of admirers merely, or by a select number of cultivated people, or by the uncritical public alone; it was widely read and really enjoyed by all classes that are at all interested in poetry. Like Pope he was speedily and generally accepted as adequately voicing the thoughts and feelings of his contemporaries. Such success always

*Compare the prologue to *In Memoriam*.

implies some specially happy adaptation of the genius of the writer to the conditions of his era,—an adaptation which spares him from the conflict and dissipation of force arising from attempts to embody themes and to adopt methods to which the age is little favourable; the inborn aptitudes of such a poet must be in harmony with existing tendencies and the tastes of his contemporaries.

Poetic conditions in his time.—Tennyson himself indicates the prime conditions, positive and negative, to which the successful poet of his own time had to accommodate himself. “I soon found,” he once said in conversation with his friend, Mr. James Knowles, “that if I meant to make any mark at all it must be by shortness, for all the men before me had been so diffuse and all the big things had been done. To get the workmanship as nearly perfect as possible is the best chance for going down the stream of time. A small vessel on fine lines is likely to float further than a great raft.”*

Tennyson here emphasizes two points, (1) the very obvious fact that he is a late poet, and (2), in consequence of that fact, that he could hope to excel only by perfection in detail and finish in technique. He is not merely a late poet in the midst of a vast accumulation of the work of predecessors in his own and other languages; the natural effect of such lateness is intensified by the fact that he comes at the close of one of those eras of marked fertility which are conspicuous at intervals in the history of poetic literature, and are separated by other eras of comparative barrenness and mediocrity. The great movement which had its beginning in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and reached its brilliant culmination in the work of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley and Keats, was, when Tennyson reached maturity (as is abundantly clear to us now), passing into its latest phase. He is a poet, if not of the decline, at least of the close, when the first enthusiasm has spent itself, when the new fields have been traversed, when the new forms have lost their novelty. Such a writer is under serious disadvantages; the most obvious or suitable themes have been treated, the early freshness has vanished. But first enthusiasm, new methods, and new themes are not favourable to perfection in detail. That comes from experience, from calm judgment, and laborious care. And here the later poet has advantages which the earlier does not enjoy. Greatness of conception may be supposed to be dependent on the individual mind, but the history of all arts shows that supreme technical skill can

* See the interesting article entitled *Aspects of Tennyson in Nineteenth Century* for January, 1893.

only be attained through the experiments, successes, and failures of generations of artists; primitive art is always awkward, new attempts inevitably suffer under defects of form. The opportunity for the poet in Tennyson's day, as he himself thought, lay in technique, in finish, in detail; and his own endowments and circumstances were such as to fit him for success in these respects. The conditions of his personal life were favourable to culture. Beyond preceding eras, the Nineteenth Century possessed the historic sense, rendered accessible, and was capable of appreciating, the literary stores of the past. Tennyson himself was endowed with openness of mind, catholic tastes, great powers of assimilation, and scholarly aptitudes. He became early familiar with the best that had been done; he was well read not only in his mother tongue, but in Greek, Latin and Italian literatures. If, then, he felt (as he himself confesses) hampered by the existence of all this splendid poetry of his predecessors, he at least succeeded in making the best of the circumstance,—studied their art, borrowed multitudinous hints, phrases, images from their works. So the reader of his works is struck by his eclecticism, the power of learning from writers of diverse genius, ages, and nations, and of welding varied materials into new and perfect wholes. Especially do we note this breadth and catholicity of Tennyson's genius, when we compare his work with that of his immediate fore-runners, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and Scott, each somewhat narrow in his poetic tastes, and excelling within a somewhat limited province. Tennyson profits by the example of writers as different as Wordsworth and Keats; he attempts varied subjects and different manners: classic, romantic, domestic themes; the simple and the ornate style; lyric, dramatic, narrative poetry; song, monologue, idyll. His success is, upon the whole, extraordinary; and this versatility makes it difficult to characterize his work in general terms. At the same time, it is abundantly manifest that only certain of these attempts are wholly congenial to his mind and manner, that others, however excellent, are *tours de force*—the results of great general poetic power patiently and judiciously employed in using what he has learnt from others.

Perfection of his work in detail.—To this breadth of taste and of reading, this power of profiting by example, Tennyson added a natural aptitude for detail, for careful and finished work. His poetic character is here in harmony with the general tendency of his age, especially manifest in the minuteness and accuracy of modern science. The same spirit is present in his delineations of nature, which surpass those of

earlier poets in the minuteness and accuracy of the features noted. His earliest publications seem to show that what impelled him to poetry was not the need of embodying some pressing thought or feeling, but the delight in heaping together beautiful details, the pleasure in musical phrases, exquisite imagery, in the skill of the artist. Whatever charm exists in such characteristic poems as *Claribel*, or the *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, lies in the details; the meaning and purport of the whole is vague. Tennyson's earliest efforts are marked by paucity of thought, absence of intense feeling, but by exuberant richness of expression. This richness was, at the beginning, excessive and unformed; but presently the poet showed that he had unusual capacity for laborious revision and self-criticism. He rapidly developed critical judgment and self-restraint. He could learn even from the galling article in *The Quarterly* for 1833.* We hear of the endless pains with which he polished line after line before publication; and, even after that, the successive texts of many passages† exhibit emendations extraordinarily numerous, minute, and effective. One is particularly surprised by the extent to which in many cases the final beauty and power of a passage are the creation of these changes, and are absent from the original text.

Even the limitations of Tennyson's genius helped him to excel in his own particular sphere. He lacked the impetuous temperament which we are wont to associate with the highest poetic endowment, ardour which springs from intense feeling or the consciousness of abundant material pressing for utterance, or of great thoughts to be revealed. There are, indeed, two kinds of artistic workers. Some are so dominated by the feeling, or thought, that it seems to take form without the conscious intervention of the artist himself. Or, at least, his thoughts and feelings are primarily biased with the whole conception—the mood, character, situation, or whatever else it may be—and all details are suggested from, and considered in relation to, this central idea. In others, there is no such dominating inspiration; the primary interest is in the beauty of detail; the whole is of secondary interest sought out as a centre and support for the parts. To Wordsworth, his own message seemed of such weight, that its form must have always had but a second place; the emotional temperament of Shelley would not permit

* See Dixon's *Primer of Tennyson*, pp. 49, fol. "Some of the pieces which drew forth [the reviewer's] sarcastic comments were omitted from future editions, and almost all were altered or re-written in respect of the censured passages."

† In *The Lady of Shalott*, *Oenone*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, striking examples are to be

him coldly to reshape what had been moulded in the white heat of inspiration. These two poets belong to the first-mentioned kind. But if the relative importance of the impressions made upon the reader by successive passages and by the whole outcome, be a criterion, Tennyson, unlike them, is an artist of the other class. Of this there is a quaint illustration in a letter* of his friend Spedding, written shortly before the composition of *Enoch Arden*: "Alfred," he says, "wants a story to treat, being full of poetry with nothing to put it in." We get a hint of this tendency to work up details, apart from the theme which they were to unfold, in the poet's letter to Mr. S. E. Dawson prefixed to the latter's edition of *The Princess*: "There was a period in my life," writes Tennyson, "when, as an artist—Turner, for instance,—takes rough sketches of landscape, etc., in order to work them eventually into some great picture; so I was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike me as picturesque in nature." We note, too, how he uses over again, in new connections, lines and phrases employed in pieces which he suppressed.

Metrical and musical effects.—The most universal and characteristic quality of Tennyson's work, then, is its perfection in detail—its finished technique, the beauty which pertains to each line and phrase. We may next inquire by what devices he attains this beauty of detail, and in what special peculiarities of technique does this mastery exhibit itself. If we turn for a clue to his earlier poems, where his natural bent is most likely to exhibit itself clearly, the first quality which gives them distinction is the subtle adaptation of sound to sense,—the attempt, by varying of lines and stanzas, by the adjustment of verse pauses, of metrical feet, of vowel and consonantal sounds, to reflect and suggest the meaning and emotional accompaniments of the thought expressed. The poet, in fact, seeks to approximate through the articulate sounds of verse to the effects produced by music. The poem to which he gave the first place in the volume of 1830, significantly entitled "*Claribel, a Melody*," exhibits this musical quality almost to the exclusion of any other; and the prevalence of this quality throughout the volume is the most novel and striking characteristic of the new poet's work. An attempt of this kind naturally leads to the taking of great liberties with the regular norm of verse in order to attain suitably varied effects; hence one is struck by the apparent capriciousness of lines and stanzas; and Coleridge was led to say after examining these pieces that the author "had begun to write poetry without

* Quoted in Dixon's *Primer*, p. 107.

very well understanding what metre was." In time, however, Tennyson learned to combine musical with properly metrical effects, and such a piece as *The Lotos-Eaters* is an example of his triumphant success. But everywhere in his poetry, this imitative rhythm is present, most effective, perhaps, when least obtrusive—when it is felt, but is scarcely capable of being exactly indicated and analysed. The influence of this tendency on his blank verse is to give it great variety, and to produce a large number of lines in which wide departures are made from the regular metrical norm. For example, in the following cases there is a multiplication of unaccented syllables :

Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn.

—*The Princess.*

Of some precipitous rivulet to the sea,

—*Gareth and Lynette.*

Melody on branch and melody in mid air.

—*Ibid.*

I saw the flaring atom-streams

Ruining along the illimitable inane.

—*Lucretius.*

Again, by the arrangement of the main pauses, a sudden break is made in the flow of the verse in keeping with the meaning conveyed :

his arms

Clash'd ; and the sound was good to Gareth's ear.

—*Gareth and Lynette.*

Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching wave

Drops flat.

—*The Last Tournament.*

made his horse

Caracole ; then bow'd his homage, bluntly saying, etc.

—*Ibid.*

Flash'd, started, met him at the door, and these, etc.

—*Ibid.*

These are two of the commonest devices of this character, but a little careful examination will reveal a great many of a more subtle or composite kind, for example :

Down the long stairs, hesitating.

—*Lancelot and Elaine.*

So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

—*Morte d'Arthur.*

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

—*Ulysses.*

The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep

Moans round with many voices.

—*Ibid.*

Again, we are often conscious of a subtle appropriateness in the choice of the vowel or consonantal sounds :

The moan of doves in immemorial elms
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

—*The Princess.*

The long low dune and lazy-plunging sea.

—*The Last Tournament.*

Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash, etc.

—*The Passing of Arthur.*

The league-long roller thundering on the reef.

—*Enoch Arden.**

Kindred but broader effects are produced by the poet's happy selection and management of stanza-forms, of which his works afford a great variety. Compare, for example, the four-line stanzas of *In Memoriam*, of the song in *The Brook*, of *The Palace of Art*, and note how each one admirably suits the theme for which it is employed. Many different elements are combined in the appropriate and subtly varied music of the following exquisite lines :—

I.

O that 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again !

II.

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter
Than anything on earth.

*Also contrast the vowel effects in

On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full

with

And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.

For further examples, see the Introduction to the Tennyson volumes in *English Classics* edited by Mr. Rowe.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
 Not thou, but like to thee :
 Ah Christ, that it were possible
 For one short hour to see
 The souls we loved, that they might tell us
 What and where they be.

Etc.

—*Maud*, Pt. ii.

Pictorial details used to suggest a thought, feeling, or situation.—

In the last paragraph attention has been drawn to the way in which the poet, through sound and metrical effects, indirectly suggests and instils the fitting tone of mind and feeling. Another peculiarity of his technique, conspicuous in his earliest volumes and pervading all his work, is a similar indirect method of suggesting or presenting a situation through the details of landscape and other material surroundings. The genius of Tennyson is eminently pictorial; he delights and excels in pictures of external objects; *The Recollections of the Arabian Nights* is nothing but a series of these, and the whole of the volume which contained this poem, bore evidence of this tendency. Such a preference does the poet's genius have for these picturesque effects that, instead of directly describing some inner condition of mind or feeling, or in addition to directly describing it, he reflects it through the external surroundings. For example, he wishes us to understand and feel the desolation and loneliness of Mariana in the poem so named; yet he does not describe the mood directly. The whole poem is a picture of the moated grange and its surroundings, from which he selects every sight and sound that may suggest loneliness and long neglect. "There is not, throughout the poem, a single epithet which belongs to the objects irrespective of the story with which the scene is associated, or a single detail introduced which does not aid the general expression of the poem. They mark either the pain with which Mariana looks at things, or the long neglect to which she has been abandoned, or some peculiarity of time and place which marks the morbid minuteness of her attention to objects."* The landscape of *The Lotos-Eaters* affords a masterly illustration of the same artifice. In *The Lady of Shalott* the scene changes to harmonize with the situation of the heroine; in the *Idylls of the King* we find this device systematically followed; the season of the year during which the action of each idyll is represented as taking place reflects and reinforces the pervading tone of that particular incident.

*See Brimley's *Essay*, pp. 8 fol., from which the above sentences are quoted.

Vocabulary and Phraseology.—Passing on to an examination of more minute elements of his style, his vocabulary and phraseology, we find them characterized by the same care and discrimination, by the same seeking after picturesque effects and beauty ; we feel also the same sense of conscious artifice ; we note a constant indebtedness to the works of his predecessors, and a masterly skill in adapting for his own purposes the happy phrases and images which he has met in his reading.* Tennyson, as has already been noted, is a versatile poet, and great variety of styles may be found in his collected works,—sometimes he is simple, sometimes realistic, but the manner most natural to him, which is most pervading, and most characteristic in his work, is a highly ornate one. It exhibits a richness and fulness of colour and imagery that is apt to withdraw the mind from the whole theme and outcome of a piece, to admiration and enjoyment of each passing phrase and image. The poet seems instinctively to select his theme so as to give scope for the exhibition of this quality, rather than for bringing home to the heart and imagination of the reader some profoundly human situation. The anguish of despised and deserted love is a subject for the highest poetry ; but it is not the anguish and sadness of the woman *Oenone* for which we chiefly care when we read Tennyson's poem, but the idyllic and classic surroundings of the mountain-nymph, the beauty of successive lines, pictures, and passages. *Morte d'Arthur* (masterpiece although it is) and all the Idylls win their power in a large measure from the same sources. For such purposes the simple and direct style is little suitable—the style where the words seem to come to the poet's pen unbidden, where the expression is so naturally the outcome of the idea as to be transparent, where the thought is so completely brought home to the imagination and heart that the manner is unnoted.† In Tennyson's expression the artist is always felt ; the conscious perception of his skill is a large part of the pleasure. So in his diction, while he does not avoid the vocabulary of ordinary life which Wordsworth preferred, he on the whole prefers a word or phrase with distinctly poetic

*Mr. Churton Collins devotes a volume (*Illustrations of Tennyson*) to tracing such adaptations. Many cases are pointed out in the notes to this volume.

† "Tennyson's decorative art, his love of colour for its own sake, of music for its own sake, lead him at times into what must always seem to the highly cultivated sense extravagances of colour, an over-profusion, a lush luxuriance, and into similar extravagances of sound. To put it briefly, he rarely trusts his thought, as Wordsworth trusted it, to build for itself a natural home of expression. So much an artist was he that Nature could not speak his language, and hence the inevitable word is rarely heard in his poetry." (Dixon, *Primer of Tennyson*, pp. 83-4.)

associations. He employs the language of earlier poetry, obsolete and rare words, antiquated preterits and past participles, novel compounds, double-epithets.* He thus wins a charm for his style, but it is not the charm of simplicity and directness, but of florid and elaborate beauty. Ingenious and picturesque periphrases supply the place of commonplace terms: so we find "the knightly growth that fringed [Arthur's] lips," "the azure pillars of the hearth" (smoke from chimneys), "moving isles of winter" (icebergs), "took a word and played upon it and made it two colours" (punned), "unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt," "nor fail in childward care" (care of children), etc. In this matter he is a follower of Keats, to whom of all English poets he owes most and whom he most resembles; but Tennyson manifests, after his earliest attempts at least, a moderation and good judgment which are his own. The pictorial character of his style is observable in the success with which he suggests the proper image by even a single word: "the ripple *washing* in the reeds," "the wild water *lapping* on the crag," "she *shrilling*, let me die," "*creamy* spray," "little breezes *dusk and shiver*."

The ever-silent spaces of the East
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

—*Tithonus*.

Fiercely flies
The blast of North and East, and ice
Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,
And bristles all the brakes and thorns
To yon hard crescent, as she hangs
Above the wood which grides and clangs
Its leafless ribs and iron horns.

—*In Memoriam*, cvii.

Similarly we note the exquisite finish and picturesqueness of phrase: "the lucid interspace of world and world."

So dark a forethought rolled about his brain
As on a dull day in an ocean cave
The blind wave feeling round his long sea hall
In silence.

* Such as *hest*, *marish*, *hooves*, *enow*, *adown*, *anear*, *boscage*, *brewis*, *boughts*, *cate*, *to oar*, *rathe*, *lurdan*, *tarriance*, *tinct*, *brand*, *Paynim*, *scud*; *clomb*, *sware*, *spake*, *brake*, *foughten*; *brain-feverous*, *green-glimmering*, *sallow-rifted*, *strange-statued*, *crag-carven*, *ruby-budded*.

Of course such words form only a very small percentage, but it should be noted that a few scattered words of this character suffice to give the predominant effect to a passage, just as a few dialectic terms and forms suffice, in the best writers, to give the desired local or conversational colour.

Akin to this felicity of phrasing and this success in appropriating picturesque words, in his power of seizing on the minuter features of nature, and his skill in flashing them upon the inward eye. It is particularly in the minuteness and accuracy of his observation of nature, that his descriptions are differentiated from those of his predecessors :

hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides three-fold to show the fruit within.

—*The Brook.*

With blasts that blow the poplar white.

—*In Memoriam*, lxii.

And on these dews that drench the furze,
And all the *silvery gossamers*
That *twinkle into green and gold.*

—*Ibid*, xi.

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
And rarely pipes the mounted thrush ;
Or underneath the barren bush
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March.

—*Ibid*, xci.

(See also preceding stanzas).

Till now the doubtful dark reveal'd
The knolls once more where, couch'd at ease,
The white kine glimmer'd, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field.

—*Ibid*, xcv.

The steer forgot to graze
And, where the hedgerow cuts the pathway, stood
Leaning his horns into the neighbour field,
And lowing to his fellows.

—*The Gardener's Daughter.*

Nigh upon the hour
When the lone hern forgets his melancholy,
Lets down his other leg, and stretching, dreams
Of goodly supper in a distant pool.

—*Gareth and Lynette.*

Lyrical expression of thought and feeling.—This skill in technique which we have been emphasizing, and the patient laboriousness and good judgment of Tennyson are qualities of wide application, and likely to give a measure of success in almost any sort of poetry which he might attempt. And indeed this success has in some measure followed the poet everywhere. In his dramas, for example, a species of art to which by universal admission, neither the poet's genius, nor the circumstances of his life, nor the conditions of his age were suited, the critics are disposed to wonder less at the defects exhibited than at

the excellence attained. Accordingly, to assertions which are true of Tennyson's work in general, it may often be possible to adduce striking exceptions. If we deny him the power of representing commonplace, contemporary men, or humour, we are confronted with *The Northern Farmer*; if playfulness, with *The Talking Oak*; if realistic tragic power, with *Rizpah*. Yet, while not denying the many shapes in which the poet's genius has shown itself, there are certain forms in which he manifestly is most completely at his ease, and certain kinds of poetry which we associate especially with him. In the first place, Tennyson excels in the lyric delineation of his own moods and feelings; of this power, *In Memoriam* gives the fullest exemplar. Among these moods he has a unique gift for rendering vague, evanescent, subtle shades of feeling, so delicate as scarcely to be capable of direct expression in language; but which may be adumbrated—by a method which we have already noted to be specially Tennyson's own—through the rhythm and music of the verse and through the use of external details. So the familiar song "Break, break, break" finds expression for dumb, wistful grief in the grey, dull scenery of the coast.* "Tears, idle tears," "Far, far away," *Crossing the Bar*, "The splendour falls," etc., furnish other masterly examples of the same power.

Expression of feeling and thought through concrete pictures.—In the second place, the poet excels in the *indirect* presentation of similar moods, feelings and thoughts through an objective situation or character. We have already called attention to this species of poetry in *Mariana*, but higher manifestations of this faculty are afforded by *Ulysses*, *Tithonus*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, *Morte d'Arthur*, *Merlin and the Gleam*. Here the traits of character, the details of scene or situation are selected not merely in order to produce an effective picture, although that is one object, but to body forth an inner experience. The poet himself has told us that this is true of the finest of these poems, *Ulysses*. He says, after speaking about *In Memoriam*: "There is more of myself in "Ulysses," which was written under the sense of loss and that all had gone by, but that still life must be fought out to the end"

* See Hutton's *Literary Essays*, p. 372, fol.: "Observe how the wash of the sea on the cold gray stones is used to prepare the mind for the feeling of helplessness with which the deeper emotions break against the hard and rigid element of human speech; how the picture is then widened out till you see the bay with children laughing on its shore, and the sailor-boy singing on its surface, and the stately ships passing on in the offing to their unseen haven, all with the view of helping us to feel the contrast between the satisfied and unsatisfied yearnings of the human heart."

(See article by Mr. Knowles, *Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1893). Such a poem gives scope to the poet's pictorial faculty, yet it is imbued with a deeper meaning and intenser feeling which elevates it above mere description.*

His Idylls.—In the third place, Tennyson's qualities lend themselves especially to, and have been repeatedly employed upon, still another poetic form, the Idyll. The name, which, like the thing, is derived from the Greeks, means 'a little picture.'† It was one of the latest literary forms to arise in Greek literature, and was developed in an era resembling our own, when to use Tennyson's language, all the great things had been done, and the poet's chance for going down the stream of time lay in brevity and finish. The word 'idyll,' therefore, (though like most poetic terms, it can only be vaguely defined) is applied to short poems of a pictorial character, couched in an elaborate and finished style, where the aim of the poet is rather to charm the æsthetic feelings by the beauty of the pictures suggested, and by the exquisite skill of the workmanship, than to move the heart by the greatness of the theme, or the truth and intensity of the delineation. In the development of poetry, grand and obvious subjects are likely to be treated first; and since these are themselves moving and beautiful, the poet cannot do better than bring them home, with the utmost vividness and truth, to the imagination of his readers; this he will best succeed in doing by the use of the simple, transparent, direct style. But when the great themes are exhausted, and the poets, in search of fresh matter, turn to trivial subjects, or subjects not wholly beautiful, or not intensely interesting and touching, they strive to make amends, for these deficiencies, by a style which gives pleasure in itself, by ornamentation which is beautiful and appropriate, but not absolutely needful for the presentation of the theme, and by idealizing with a view to æsthetic charm, rather than with a view to profound emotional effects. In *Oenone*, for example, Tennyson presents a subject

* See Hutton, *Literary Essays*, p. 364, fol.: "Even when Tennyson's poems are uniformly moulded by an 'infused' soul, one not infrequently notices the excess of the faculty of vision over the governing conception which moulds the vision, so that I think he is almost always most successful when his poem begins in a thought or a feeling rather than from a picture or narrative, for then the thought or feeling dominates and controls his otherwise too lavish fancy. 'Ulysses' and 'Tithonus' are far superior to 'Oenone,' exquisite as the pictorial workmanship of 'Oenone' is. . . . Whenever Tennyson's pictorial fancy has had it in any degree in its power to run away with the guiding and controlling mind, the richness of the workmanship has to some extent overgrown the spiritual principle of his poems."

† See Stedman's *Victorian Poets*, chap. vi.

from Greek legend, unreal and remote to us, and therefore, however pathetic the situation represented, incapable of kindling our deepest sympathy. On the other hand, it is a subject full of æsthetic situations, affording ample scope for the display of sensuous beauty, and free from the commonplaceness and ugliness which must always cling to what is derived from our actual world. In other idylls, the poet does not go so far afield for a theme ; in *The Gardener's Daughter*, he takes contemporary life ; but again, he selects on the ground of beauty and charm, and excludes every trait which might interfere with these ; as a consequence, we may say, the picture is so idyllic, that we scarcely feel it to be actual and real. It does not stir the deeper feelings connected with love, as *Romeo and Juliet* does ; the poet makes no such attempt. Again, in *Enoch Arden* we have a theme intensely pathetic, taken from homely, actual English life ; yet the author does not depend mainly upon the genuine poetic power of his matter, does not treat it *simply*, as Wordsworth has treated a similar theme in *Michael* ; Tennyson's treatment is idyllic, and the actual characteristics of the story are lost in the gorgeous and alien ornament.* Again the *Idylls of the King*, though in their final shape aiming at something beyond mere idyllic beauty, and bound into a larger unity, are yet on the basis of their general style and character, properly termed idylls. Their chief interest does not depend upon the loftiest elements that can enter into a work of art, the truthful and powerful presentation of human life and character ; they do not stir our sympathies and interest as these are stirred by the spectacle of actual existence. For notwithstanding the pathos and tragic force of occasional passages, we are, on the whole, drawn to the *Idylls of the King*, not by our sympathy with the personages, their sufferings and their destiny, but by enjoyment of the verse, by diction and imagery, by the charm of a picture more

*See Bagehot's Essay on *Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning*. Mr. Bagehot happily cites, as an exaggerated example of this ornate style, the following passage, where the poet intentionally obscures and hides the real subject, viz., the peddling of fish (which is certainly not poetical) by quite extraneous details :

Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean spoil
 In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
 Rough-reddened with a thousand winter gales,
 Not only to the market-cross were known
 But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
 Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp
 And peacock yew-tree of the lonely hall,
 Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

romantic and sensuously beautiful than that afforded by the real world, Tennyson showed a certain shyness of the task of representing actual life as it is. The condition of society, manners, and thought in the *Idylls of the King* plainly did not exist at any period of the world's history. In *The Princess*, where the theme and central situation belongs essentially to the present day, where the character, thoughts, aims, pursuits of the heroine bear unmistakably the impress of the nineteenth century, the poet does not venture to give these a realistic setting; but with the aid of reminiscences from chivalry and the Middle Ages, constructs a wholly fanciful but very beautiful background for his picture. Some poets reveal the great and beautiful by penetrating beneath the superficial husk of the commonplace and ugly in life about us; others, like Keats and Tennyson, by casting about it an atmosphere of charm, a glamour of fancy. "It is the distance," said Tennyson, "that charms me in the landscape, the picture and the past, and not the immediate to-day in which I move." *

In pointing out the fact that idyllic poetry is not of the highest order, we are neither condemning it nor disparaging Tennyson. In the domain of poetic art there are many mansions; the idyll has its place and functions. We do not always desire the grander, more profound, and therefore more exacting, art of *Othello* and *Lear*. At times we are glad to escape to the charm and beauty of a fanciful world, remote from this of our real experience. In the sort of poetry which soothes and charms, yields calm pleasure, and pure, yet sensuous, delight, Tennyson is a master; and, in particular, he has almost identified the idyll in English literature with his own name.

His longer works.—One point in Tennyson's deliverance (see p. 102) on the conditions of poetry in his day, remains to be noted. Whether it is true or not that "all the big things had been done," it is unquestionably true in Tennyson's own case that he makes his mark "by shortness." Grandeur and grasp of conception, the ability to conceive a great whole which should be an effective artistic unit, was not his. That mental peculiarity which, as we have seen, inclined him to work from details upwards, rather than from the general conception downwards, is still more evident when we examine the structure of his more ambitious attempts. His longer poems are made by joining together smaller wholes; their unity is a second and added idea. In *In Memoriam*, there is, doubtless, a line of development, a connection in the

* *Aspects of Tennyson*, in *Nineteenth Century* for January, 1893.

thoughts, and a unity of tone among the several lyrics; they arise from a common germinal experience, they follow in natural sequence; but they are not manifestly members of an organized body to whose beauty and completeness they contribute, and which would be maimed by their absence. They are scarcely more a whole, than the series of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*; they are not a unit in the sense in which *Macbeth*, or *Othello*, or *Romeo and Juliet*, or *Paradise Lost* is a unit. Tennyson's remark as to the way in which *In Memoriam* was constructed is significant in this connection: "The general way of its being written was so queer that if there were a blank space, I would put in a poem,"* and might, apparently, be applied also to the *Idylls of the King* and to *Maud*. It is noteworthy with regard to the former—the most ambitious of his "big things"—that several of the parts were published before the whole was *clearly* conceived, if conceived at all (See *Select Poems*, 1901, p. 206); and that several other parts were added after the whole had been *apparently* completed. The unity is of the loosest kind; there is no steady development of plot interest. Each idyll does not win its complete and deepest interest from its relation to the whole, as in the case with each scene of Shakespeare's plays, and each book of *Paradise Lost*. Again in *Maud*, the central and finest lyric "O that 'twere possible" was published long before *Maud* was written or dreamed of. It was a second thought to build around this a series of songs which should unfold a character and a story; the poem affords no stringent standard by which we can say that each of these songs is, or is not necessary; they might have been either more or fewer. What is of still greater importance: several of these songs—the one just referred to, for example—do not lose, but actually gain by being considered apart from the context, by being separated from the hysterical hero and his story. There remains (apart from the dramas) one other long work *The Princess*; this *does* possess more of unity; yet the poet himself is sensible of some incongruity in the structure; and in order that his work may not be tried by the strictest standard of art, he imaginatively accounts for this defect by adding a prologue and epilogue which explain that *The Princess* is not to be treated as the conception of one mind, but as a story told by seven different narrators, and, in consequence, it 'moves in a strange diagonal.'† This apology for a lack of consistency is thrust into the foreground by the second title of the piece, "*The Princess; a Medley*." To sum up, Tennyson's highest

* *Aspects of Tennyson*, by Knowles, in *Nineteenth Century* for Jan. 1893.

† See ll. 27-28 of the *Conclusion to The Princess*.

excellences do not arise from qualities which can be exhibited only in extensive poems upon great and broad themes, but from qualities which may also belong to short unambitious pieces. He requires neither the grandest sort of theme, nor a very extensive canvas to reveal the full power of his art.

General character of Tennyson's thought.—We have emphasized the adaptation of the peculiar endowments of Tennyson to the conditions and opportunities of poetic art in his day. These endowments have given him extraordinary excellence in technique; Tennyson is one of the most versatile and perfect artists among English poets. Turning now from form to thought and matter, such rank can no longer be maintained for him. In those earliest pieces where we find the main characteristics of his technique (though as yet somewhat crude) abundantly present, we also observe, on the whole, comparative thinness of matter. Undoubtedly, as he grew older, and experience and knowledge increased, his work became much less purely pictorial and fanciful; he infused more of human nature into his poems, dwelt less aloof in a world of fancy* ; his sympathies widened, his heart was touched to deeper issues, and there was more of thought, of what Matthew Arnold calls 'the criticism of life'. A growing realism in the characters, and scenes depicted, and in the style employed, is especially noticeable in his later miscellaneous pieces beginning with the *Poems and Ballads* of 1880. But, after all, what gives Tennyson his high and unique place among the poets is, not power of thought, but power of form. He has no specially profound insight into character, or broad experience of life. His sensitive, shy, and, apparently, little genial nature, and the seclusion of his habits were not favourable to acquiring these. Nor is there any special originality in his ideas or in his attitude toward the facts of life. On the other hand, his receptive and active intelligence readily assimilated conceptions which were in the air; his calm and sane judgment enabled him to seize them in their truer and more permanent aspects; so that, while he makes no bold and original contributions to our store of ideas, no poet probably in the whole range of English literature has more fully and adequately voiced the thought and spirit of his own generation. This is another cause of his popularity. The ordinary reader is not repelled by ideas, or ways of viewing them, to which he is unaccustomed; he finds the questions in which he is interested, and the current opinions in

* Compare for example the fanciful and unreal, though exquisitely beautiful *Lady of Shalott*, with the more human story, made out of the same material, in *Lancelot and Elaine*.

regard to them. Fortunately for the poet, the age was fertile in novel and germinal conceptions, and he had rare skill in embodying these in poetic form without giving any sense of incongruity. His entrance upon his literary career was contemporaneous with the beginning of a marked epoch in intellectual and national progress.* In politics, the years of repression and stagnation which had originated in the dread of the French Revolution, and been prolonged by the struggle against Napoleon for national existence, began, about 1820, to yield before new forces in the political and intellectual world; it was fully ushered in by the realization of Parliamentary Reform in 1832. It was an age of rapid change, of great national development, of extraordinary commercial and scientific progress, of political theories and reforms, of new movements in philosophy and religion, and, in its earlier part, of great hopefulness. The chief characteristics of this age are faithfully reflected in Tennyson's verse—its optimism, its enthusiasm for science its belief in the steady and rapid progress of social institutions towards perfection, its religious unrest, its new scientific ideas. But Tennyson outlived this epoch, as he outlived the greater number of his own contemporaries. In his old age he found many of the anticipations of his youth disappointed, he found himself amidst a generation exhibiting ultra-democratic and radical tendencies with which he could not sympathize,—he found the class to which he belonged by association and with

* "The very year of Tennyson's first volume [1830] was the year of the second French Revolution, and the second English revolution; the year of the 'Three Days' in Paris, and of the appearance of Lord Gray as Prime Minister in England and champion of the Reform Bill. It was the year of the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester railway. Mr. Huskisson, who met his death on that occasion, had recently brought forward the first notions of Free Trade, which the beginnings of steam navigation were soon to do much to develop. It was the year of Lyell's 'Principles of Geology,' and of Comte's 'Cours de Philosophie Positive.' Keble's 'Christian Year' had been printed in 1827; and in 1829 Catholic Emancipation had become law; and forthwith O'Connell began to agitate for Repeal of the Union. The position of the Irish Church was called in question in 1831; and in the same year the Corn Law Rhymes of Ebenezer Elliott preached more powerfully than from any pulpit a new doctrine for the poor:

'It is the deadly Power that makes
Bread dear and labour cheap.'

At this time rick-burning was rife (To 'Mary Boyle,' viii, ix, x. Also 'The Princess,' iv, 363-367), and Hunt and Cobbett were filling the new-forming mind of the masses with ideas of social equality, while the most autocratic of European nations, 'that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East' was absorbing Poland. The year of Tennyson's second volume passed the Reform Bill, brought out 'Tracts for the Times,' proposed to emancipate slaves, saw Faraday's Experiments in Electricity, and heard George Coombe's lecture on popular education." (Luce's *Handbook to Tennyson*, pp. 12-13.)

which he sympathized in virtue of its ideals and the beauty of its actual life—the landed gentry—losing political influence, suffering from material loss, possibly destined to be crushed out of existence in the struggle of modern life. The consequence of this, and of the natural effects of old age, is a marked change in the tone of his writings; a loss of hopefulness, a growing bitterness with the existing condition of things.*

Tennyson's preference for middle positions.—Tennyson was, however, not the mere creature of his age—a mirror to reflect indifferently each passing phase of thought. He had a pronounced personality of his own, which led him to find interest in some tendencies and to be unresponsive to others; to embody certain ideas with enthusiasm, and touch upon others only that he may testify his repugnance. We have already had occasion to mention a certain lack of ardour and impetuosity in the poet, calmness of temperament and self-control, sane judgment and good taste. Such qualities beget a constitutional preference for middle courses, a dislike of excess and extremes. We find, accordingly, Tennyson's sympathies are everywhere with moderate views: in politics, in religion, in the 'woman question,' etc. So, the slow and orderly development of the English nation, the self-restraint and spirit of compromise manifested in her history, the character of her existing institutions, the spirit in which the reforms of his own day were being carried out, were in harmony with the poet's nature, and inspired not a little of the fervour of the patriotic passages in his works. Even his æsthetic sense was satisfied with the venerable and orderly beauty of English institutions; just as he delighted to depict the embodiment of the same spirit and forces in the prevailing features of English landscape:

An English home-gray twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Crudity, excess, violence, offended both his æsthetic and his intellectual nature. He believed in progress, but it must be gradual. He was, as the three political poems included in this volume show, a liberal conservative, in the natural sense of the words. He had no sympathy with the radicalism of his times, with root-and-branch theories that demanded sudden and violent changes in institutions and conditions to which his heart was attached. He had the historic sense of his age; it was not

*Compare the poem on *Freedom* with the political poems of 1833: "Love Thou Thy Land," etc.; and *Locksley Hall*, with *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*.

merely England as it existed, that he saw and loved ; it was England the embodiment of a long and unbroken development through the wise and heroic efforts of generations of Englishmen—England teeming with associations from a splendid past. But of the suffering and misery out of which came the radical theories that he disliked, he seems to have had no adequate sense, through limitations either of his sympathies or of his experience. He saw things too exclusively from the point of view of the country-gentleman—the class to which he was most closely bound, both by personal association, and by the beauty and charm of their life and its surroundings. But it was his good fortune, as far as immediate popularity was concerned, to be in thought and feeling the average educated Englishman ; though this also implied a narrowness, a lack of understanding of non-English conditions, of the point of view of other classes than his own, a want of sympathy with new social movements that, in turn, result in limitation and conventionality in his work.

His ideals of character and conduct.—As Tennyson's work is marked by good taste and moderation, as his character and life were exempt from marked eccentricities and departures from social conventions, and as his views were marked by a preference for middle courses ; so the ideals of character and conduct displayed in his poetry, exhibit kindred peculiarities. His King Arthur, the type of the highest manhood, is distinguished by his self-control, his good sense, his practical activity. When, in the *Holy Grail*, his knights ride away in pursuit of the Heavenly vision, the King remains at his post faithful to the more homely calls of life :

Seeing the King must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plow,
Who may not wander from the allotted field
Before his work be done.

The evils and disorder which are represented as the consequences of the quest of the Grail, show that the poet's sympathies are not with the mystical enthusiasm of Galahad, but with the more prosaic and practical aims of Arthur—the redressing of wrong, the improvement of the condition of the race.* All that partakes of extravagance is

*“ With Mr. Tennyson the mystic is always the visionary who suffers from an over-excitable fancy. The nobler aspects of the mystical religious spirit are unrepresented in his poetry. We find nowhere among the persons of his imagination a Teresa, uniting as she did in so eminent a degree an administrative genius, a genius for action with the genius of exalted piety.” (Dowden's *Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning*.)

foreign to his nature. Self-restrained characters are more to his taste than passionate ones. He does not succeed in depicting the latter class; the hero of *Maud* is morbid and excitable, not strong; does not exhibit the grand and imposing aspect of intense emotion. Tennyson's sympathies are with that thoroughly English ideal 'the gentleman'—an ideal where the controlling forces count for more than the impelling. The average Englishman admires the man who is strong to endure external shocks, who has his own nature well in hand, who severely restrains the exhibition even of perfectly innocent and laudable feelings; the demonstrativeness of the Frenchman and German, the passionate and effusive nature in general, have for him something effeminate. Here Tennyson and his audience are again at one. The rapturous and mystical communion with nature, which is the theme of Wordsworth's poetry, or the beauty and saving power of intense passion, of which Shelley and Browning are the apostles, meet no such ready response from Englishmen as the praise of self-restraint, of obedience to duty, of beneficent practical activity which are enshrined in Tennyson's writings. A disciplined nature wisely devoted to the practical work of improving society is Tennyson's highest ideal of life, the ideal he puts into the mouth of Athene—herself the incarnation of the wisdom and virtue which the Greek mind found in the mean:

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear;
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.

.

Oh! rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
 So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a god's,
 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom."

His attitude towards the great questions.—Closely akin to these pervading tendencies of Tennyson's nature is his admiration and reverence for law.* This predominant trait of the poet's mind is revealed

* See Dowden's *Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning in Studies in Literature*.

not only in the political sphere upon which we have already lightly touched, but comes out in the way in which he regards the whole universe. Here, again, Tennyson is fortunate in his sensitive appreciation for an aspect of nature which has been revealed with unprecedented clearness and force by the modern science. He shares here to the full the enthusiasm of the scientific investigator. Further, the scientific conception that the whole universe is the manifestation, not only of law, but also of orderly, slow, and regular development, was in harmony with the poet's mind and feeling. He early accepted the idea of development; it is to be found in *In Memoriam*. But while entering heartily into the scientific enthusiasm of his time, both because science improved the condition of man's life and because scientific conceptions commended themselves to his own intellect and feeling, he was always strenuously opposed to the purely materialistic and non-spiritual views of the universe to which science was supposed by some to lead. The arguments from external nature adduced against theistic and spiritual ideas, he always met, as in *In Memoriam*, by arguments from the inner consciousness.* Akin to his rejection of materialism, is that strenuous adherence to the belief in immortality which comes out again and again in his poetry. It is interesting that the two greatest poets of the generation, Tennyson and Browning, should give such marked prominence to this matter in their works. But, apart from his conviction of spiritual and personal force in the universe, and of a personal immortality, Tennyson manifests the vagueness and doubt of his generation in regard to the great problems; and even the beliefs that he did maintain, he clings to rather than confidently maintains. This lack of strong convictions, of a message to convey, of ardent passion, of inspiration, his somewhat conventional and narrow range of sympathy, the elaboration of his style,—all contribute towards the sense that possesses the reader (notwithstanding all his admiration for the poet's work) that there is a something lacking, a want of force and of originality needful to put him in the very highest rank of poets. He soothes and charms rather than braces and inspires. He reflects our own thoughts rather than quickens us. He is a poet of beauty rather than of power.

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* See for example *In Memoriam*, cxvii. See also on these points *Tennyson as the Poet of Evolution*, by Theodore Watts, in *Nineteenth Century*, vol. xxxiv.

Annotated editions of a large number of the poems are to be found in various volumes of Macmillan's *English Classics*; also of the *Idylls of the King* and a number of other poems in volumes ed. by Rolfe (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.); also miscellaneous selections of the poems edited for Canadian schools by Messrs. Wetherell, Burt, Sykes, and Libby; to these editions the present editor is indebted, especially to Rolfe's for variant readings. A large Tennyson literature is now in existence, of which a useful bibliography will be found in Dixon's *Primer of Tennyson* (Methuen, London, 1866)—not only essays but volumes dealing either with his work in general or with special poems, particularly with the *Idylls of the King* and *In Memoriam*. Among these, one of the best is Gwynn's *Tennyson* (Blackie, 1899); Dixon's *Primer*, already mentioned, contains useful information and a judicious view of the poet's genius; Luce's *Handbook to the Works of Alfred Tennyson* (Bell, London, 1895), besides a general survey of Tennyson's work, takes up each poem individually; Stopford Brooke's *Tennyson: His Art and Relation to Modern Life* (Isbister, London, 1894) contains a very full critical examination of Tennyson's work; Lyall's *Tennyson (English Men of Letters)*; of treatises on individual poems, we have MacCallum's *Tennyson's Idylls and Arthurian Story* (Glasgow, Maclehose, 1894) mainly occupied by the history of these legends in literature, while Elsdale's *Studies in the Idylls* (Macmillan) and Littledale's *Essays on Tennyson's Idylls* are chiefly devoted with an examination and interpretation of the *Idylls* themselves; the articles on the *Idylls* in the *Contemporary Review* for Jan. 1870, and for May 1873, are based on the poet's own explanations; Dawson's *Study of the Princess* (Montreal, 1882), Genung's *In Memoriam* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), Gatty's *Key to In Memoriam* (Bell, London, 3rd ed. 1885), Bradley's *In Memoriam* with notes, King's *In Memoriam* (Morang, Toronto). For various readings and development of the text, Churton Collins' *Early Poems of Alfred Tennyson*, Nicoll's *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. II (Hodder and Stoughton), and Jones' *Growth of the Idylls of the King* (Lippincott, Phila., 1895); Churton Collins' *Illustrations of Tennyson* (Chatto and Windus, 1891) gathers illustrations and originals from Greek, etc. Critical essays: in Stedman's *Victorian Poets* (Houghton, Mifflin), in Brimley's *Essays* (Macmillan), Hutton's *Literary Essays* (Macmillan), Bagehot's *Literary Studies* (Longmans), Dowden's *Studies in Literature* (Kegan Paul), Ward's *English Poets* by Jebb, articles in the *Nineteenth Century* for 1893, etc.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

This poem first appeared in the volume of 1830, and has undergone only slight alterations in text. It is a good example of the poet's earliest work,—of its musical charm and pictorial character, of richness and elaborateness of diction and imagery carried even to excess. It paints a series of pictures, charming from their sensuous beauty, which are suggested to Tennyson's imagination by reminiscences of the *Arabian Nights*, more particularly of one of the stories, that of *Nur Al-Din Ali and the Damsel Anis al Julis*, especially of that part of the story narrated on the Thirty-sixth Night. The varying arrangement of the rhymes in the several stanzas should be noted.

Arabian Nights. The famous collection of Arabian stories known as *The Thousand and One Nights*, which, in abbreviated selections, is familiar to most children, especially through the story of *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*.

7. Bagdat. A city situated on both banks of the Tigris, some 500 miles from its mouth. "It has an extremely picturesque appearance from the outside, being encircled and interspersed with groves of date trees, through which one may catch the gleams of domes and minarets." In the 9th century it was greatly enlarged by Haroun al Raschid.

fretted. Orna^mented with bands arranged at right angles.

9. sworn. 'Close' or 'firm'; cf. the expression "sworn friends."

10. golden prime. The epithet is not used in its literal sense, but as suggesting the Age of Gold—the period when, according to ancient myth, the world was in its perfection. *Prime* is the season of highest vigour and splendour.

11. Haroun, surnamed Al-Raschid ('the orthodox'), flourished 736-809 A.D. (i.e., about the time of Charlemagne), caliph of Bagdat, famed for his bravery and magnificence, and for his patronage of literature and art.

12. Anight. 'By night'; cf. *As You Like It*, ii., 4:—"Coming anight to Jane Smile."

15. citron-shadows. 'Shadows of the citron trees'; 'citron' is applied to lemon-trees and allied species.

23. **clear-stemm'd platans.** Oriental plane-trees which run up smoothly for some height before sending out their wide-spreading branches.

24. **The outlet of the river into the canal.**

26. **sluiced.** Led out by a sluice, which, in its narrow sense, is an artificial passage for water fitted with a gate. Cf. *Par. Lost*, i., 701: "veins of liquid fire Sluic'd from the lake."

28-29. The green sward with its flowers resembled "damask-work" (raised patterns in a woven fabric) or "deep inlay" (ornamental work when pieces of wood, metal, ivory, etc., are let into a background of some different, or differently coloured, material).

36. **star-strown calm.** The smooth water in which the stars were reflected.

37. **night in night.** The still greater darkness caused by the close shadows of the trees.

40. **clomb.** Such antiquated verbal forms are very frequently employed by Tennyson; see p. 110

47. **rivage.** Bank; Rolfe compares Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, iv., 6, 20:

The which Pactolus with his waters shere
Throws forth upon the rivage round about him near.

An example of the sort of diction referred to on p. 110.

48-49. Note the abundance of epithets here, and throughout the poem.

52. **sparkling flints.** 'The gravel at the bottom of the stream'; it seems scarcely probable that these would be visible in the circumstances.

58. **engrain'd.** Properly 'dyed in fast colours'; the poet seems still to have the idea of a woven fabric in his mind, as at line 28.

59. **marge.** A common poetical form for "margin."

60. **fluted.** 'With longitudinal grooves'; as, e.g., in Greek pillars.

63. **studded wide.** 'Embossed at intervals.' The word "studded" keeps up the idea of an ornamented surface (cf. ll. 25, 58).

64. **With disks and tiars.** "Disks" suggests round, flattish blossoms, "tiars" more elongated and convex forms. "Tiara" is

properly an eastern hat, and is naturally suggested by the locality of the poem. For the poetical form "tiar," cf. *Par. Lost*, iii., 625.

68. In closest coverture. 'So as to afford a close coverture'; Rolfe cites *Much Ado*, iii., 1: "in closest coverture."

70. bulbul. The Persian name for the nightingale.

71. Not he, etc. The song of the nightingale seems to express too much to be the voice of a bird merely; cf. Shelley's *To a Skylark*:

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart.

which possess'd. 'Held and interpenetrated.'

72-73. delight, etc., are not governed by "possessed," but in apposition to "something."

74-75. 'A something which is eternal, of complex nature, irrepressible, above conditions of time and space.' With the whole passage cf. Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*.

76. flattering. 'Lending a lustre to'; cf. *Aylmer's Field*: "A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs," and Shakespeare, *Sonnet*, 33:

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye.

78. Black. The original reading was "black-green"; the change gives emphasis to "black," inasmuch as its one syllable does duty for the two syllables of the regular foot.

81. A sudden splendour. The light from the Pavilion of the Caliphate (see l. 114).

84. counterchanged. 'Interchanged'; cf. *In Memoriam*, lxxxix:

Witch-elms that counterchange the floor
Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright.

95. as in sleep. 'As if I were asleep.'

100. drawn. "Borne" was the original reading.

101. pleasance. Archaic and poetical for 'pleasure'. Cf. the following passage from the original story in the *Arabian Nights*: "Now this"

garden was named the Garden of Gladness and therein stood a belvedere
hight the Palace of Pleasure."

106. **rosaries.** In the sense of the Latin original (*rosarium*), 'gardens, or beds, of roses.'

108. Symbols that belonged to, or recalled, the time.

112. **the long alley's latticed shade.** The original speaks of a walk with "a covering of trellis work of canes extending along the whole length."

114. **Caliphat** (usually "Caliphate") the dominion of the Caliphs, or successors of Mahomet.

122. In the original we are told that the palace was illuminated with "eighty latticed windows, and eighty lamps suspended, and in the midst a great candlestick of gold."

123. **quintessence.** The stress is usually upon the second syllable, but the pronunciation which the metre here requires, is also admissible.

125. **silvers.** A bold use of the plural, meaning, of course, 'silver candlesticks.'

127. **mooncd.** 'Ornamented with crescents'—the symbol of Turkish dominion, hence an anachronism here.

domes aloof In inmost **Bagdat.** The domes in the centre of the city, which stood out in the distance.

130. time is the object of "celebrate" (l. 131).

135. **argent-lidded.** "Argent" refers to the colour; so in *Dream of Fair Women*, l. 158: "the polish'd argent of her breast."

148. **diaper'd.** The word is applied to material covered with a regularly repeated pattern produced in the weaving without use of colour.

148-9. The lines seem to suggest that the cloth of gold had inwrought upon it garlands of flowers (as a border probably) and, besides that, a regularly repeated pattern (presumably in the main body of the cloth).

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

First published in 1832, but, as the notes show, the poem has been greatly improved by later revision. It is the first work which Tennyson based upon Arthurian legends; in this case contained, according to Palgrave, in an Italian novel (see note on l. 9). *Lancelot and Elaine* is a very different treatment of the same story where the interest is more human and the motives and characters perfectly comprehensible. Here we have a beautiful series of pictures presenting part of the history of a mysterious being, involved in a strange fate. This mystery of the poem suggests symbolism, to which the poet was inclined, as, for example, in *The Palace of Art* and the *Idylls of the King*; so Mr. Hutton seems to think that the history of the poet's own genius is shadowed forth, which "was sick of the magic of fancy and its picture-shadows, and was turning away from them to the poetry of human life." "The key to this tale of magic 'symbolism' is of deep human significance, and is to be found, perhaps, in the lines:

Or when the moon was overhead
Came two young lovers lately wed;
'I am half sick of shadows' said
The Lady of Shalott.

Canon Ainger in his *Tennyson for the Young* quotes the following interpretation given him by my father: "The new-born love of something, for some one, in the wide world from which she has been so long excluded, takes her out of the region of shadows into that of realities." (*Life, I, 116.*) It was doubtless, however, the picturesque aspects of the subject, rather than any deep human significance, that attracted and occupied the poet.

3. **wold.** 'Open country.' The landscape the poet was most familiar with at this time was the landscape of Lincolnshire. According to the *Century Dictionary* "The wolds of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire are high rolling districts, bare of trees and exactly similar to the downs of the southern part of England." The word appears in *Lear*, iii, 4, in the form "old."

meet the sky. Note how suggestive is the phrase of the wide uninterrupted prospect.

5. **many-tower'd Camelot.** Camelot is the capital of Arthur's domain, identified with Winchester by Malory (Bk. II, chap. xix); but

in Tennyson's treatment of the Arthurian legends, the scenes and geography are wholly imaginary, and the poet seems purposely to shun any touch which might serve to connect his scenes with actual localities.

In *Gareth and Lynette* we have a description of Camelot :

Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
And stately, rich in emblem and the work
Of ancient kings who did their days in stone ;
Which Merlin's hand, the mage at Arthur's court,
Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and everywhere
At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessening peak
And pinnacle, and had made it spire to heaven.

6-9. In the edition of 1832, these lines read—

The yellow-leavèd waterlily,
The green-sheathèd daffodilly,
Tremble in the water chilly,
Round about Shalott.

9. *Shalott*. This form of the name is probably suggested by Italian original *Donna di Scalotta*. In the *Idylls of the King*, 'Astolat,' the form used by Malory, is employed.

10-12. In 1832 the reading was—

Willows whiten, aspens shiver,
The sunbeam-showers break and quiver
In the stream that runneth ever.

10. *Willows whiten* through the breeze exposing the lower and lighter side of the willow leaves.

11. *dusk and shiver*. The darkening is due to the breaking up of the smooth surface of the water so that it no longer reflects the light.

19. The following two stanzas stood in the ed. of 1832 :—

Underneath the bearded barley,
The reaper, reaping late and early,
Hears her ever chanting cheerly,
Like an angel, singing clearly,
O'er the stream of Camelot.
Piling the sheaves in furrows airy,
Beneath the moon, the reaper weary
Listening whispers, ' 'tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott.'
The little isle is all inrailed
With a rose fence, and overtrailed

With roses: by the marge unhailed
 The shallop flitteth silkensailed,
 Skimming down to Camelot.
 A pearl garland winds her head:
 She leaneth on a velvet bed,
 Full royally apparellèd
 The Lady of Shalott.

It will be noted that, in his second version, the poet gains the great advantage of indicating the *aloofness* of the mysterious heroine,—a prime point in the story—of which, as it originally stood, there was no indication in Pt. I.; the picture of the barges, etc., serves to intensify this by contrast. The vague echoes of song are in much better keeping with all the traits of the Lady of Shalott than the phrase, ‘like an angel, singing clearly.’

37. In the ed. of 1832:—

No time hath she to sport and play:
 A charmed web she weaves alway.
 A curse is on her if she stay
 Her weaving, either night or day,
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what that curse may be;
 Therefore she weaveth steadily,
 Therefore no other care has she,
 The Lady of Shalott.
 She lives with little joy or fear,
 Over the water, running near,
 The sheepball tinkles in her ear,
 Before her hangs a mirror clear,
 Reflecting towered Camelot.
 And as the mazy web she whirls,
 She sees the surly village churls, etc.

56. *pad.* ‘An easy paced horse’ (etymologically connected with *path*).

64. *still.* ‘Always,’ ‘ever.’

76. *greaves.* ‘Armor to protect the shins.’

82. *free.* The bridle was held with a slack hand.

84. *Galaxy.* The Milky Way (from Gk. γάλα γάλακτος, milk).

86. *to.* In ed. of 1832 “from”; so also l. 104.

87. *blazon’d.* ‘Ornamented with heraldic devices.’

baldric. ‘A belt worn over one shoulder and crossing the breast.’

91. All. Cf. Coleridge, *Ancient Mariner* :

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand, etc.

98. bearded meteor. The beard is, of course, what could be more prosaically described as the 'tail.'

99. still. In ed. of 1832, "green."

101. hooves. Archaic plural.

107. by the river. In ed. of 1832, "tirra lirra."

111. water-lily. In ed. of 1832, "water flower."

115. The mirror reflects both Lancelot on the bank, and his image in the water.

119. Note how throughout the poem, the season of the year and the weather are made to harmonize with the events of the story; the same device is adopted in the *Idylls of the King*; see p. 108 of this volume.

123-126. In the ed. of 1832—

Outside the isle a shallow boat
Beneath the willow lay afloat,
Below the carven stern she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

Then followed a stanza which has been omitted—

A cloudwhite crown of pearl she dight
All raimented in snowy white
That loosely flew (her zone in sight,
Clasped with one blinding diamond bright)
Her wide eyes fixed on Camelot.
Though the squally east wind keenly
Blew, with folded arms serenely
By the water stood she queenly
Lady of Shalott.

127. In the ed. of 1832—

With a steady stony glance—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Beholding all his own mischance,
Mute, with glassy countenance—
She looked down to Camelot.
It was the closing, etc.

136. In the ed. of 1832—

As when to sailors while they roam,
 By creeks and outfalls far from home,
 Rising and dropping with the foam,
 From dying swans wild warblings come,
 Blown shoreward ; so to Camelot
 Still as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her chanting her death song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

145. In 1832—

A long drawn carol, mournful, holy,
 She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her eyes were darkened wholly,
 And her smooth face sharpened slowly, etc.

156. In 1832—

A pale, pale corpse she floated by,
 Dead cold, between the houses high,
 Dead into towered Camelot.
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 To the planked wharfrage came :
 Below the stern they read her name,
 ‘The Lady of Shalott.’

They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,
 Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire, and guest.
 There lay a parchment on her breast,
 That puzzled more than all the rest,
 The well fed wits of Camelot.
 ‘The web was woven curiously,
 The charm is broken utterly,
 Draw near and fear not—this is I
 The Lady of Shalott.

It will be noted how great is the improvement made by the changes in the original version ; particularly the poem gains in unity by the omission of needless details, or of details not in perfect keeping with the general effect, *e.g.*: the stanza beginning ‘As when to sailors,’ etc.; the dwelling on unpleasing aspects of death (stanza next to the last), which mars the simple beauty and impressiveness of the appearance of the dead Lady ; above all, the introduction of Lancelot in the closing lines affords a wholly new and effective picture.

165. royal cheer. The gaiety at the banquet in the palace.

OENONE.

First printed in the volume of 1832; but, in parts, greatly altered and improved since. It is the first of the Tennysonian *Idylls* proper—a form imitating in general character and in style the works of Theocritus, a Greek poet of the Alexandrian period (see p. 113 of this volume and Stedman's *Victorian Poets*, chap. vi.). Further, it is an example of Tennyson's practice of infusing a modern spirit into a classical theme. The latter affords a picturesque framework with opportunities for beautiful details to charm the imaginative vision and gratify the æsthetic taste; the former gives elevation, and profounder interest and significance to the subject. In the present poem the combination is not so complete and successful as in some other poems (*Ulysses*, for example) being chiefly found in Athene's speech, but the theme is brought closer to the reader's sympathies by the pathetic interest of the situation.

1-29. In the ed. of 1832, the following is the reading:

There is a dale in Ida, lovelier
Than any in old Ionia, beautiful
With emerald slopes of sunny sward, that lean
Above the loud glenriver, which hath worn
A path thro' steepdown granite walls below
Mantled with flowering tendriltwine. In front
The cedar shadowy valleys open wide.
Far seen, high over all the Godbuilt wall
And many a snowycolumned range divine,
Mounted with awful sculptures—men and Gods,
The work of Gods—bright on a darkblue sky
The windy citadel of Ilion
Shone, like the crown of Troas. Hither came
Mournful Oenone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate. Round her neck,
Her neck all marblewhite and marblecold,
Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.
She, leaning on a vine-entwined stone,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shadow
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff,

O mother Ida, manyfountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
The grasshopper is silent in the grass,
The lizard with his shadow on the stone,
Sleeps like a shadow, and the scarletwinged
Cicala in the noonday leapeth not.
Along the water-rounded granite-rock
The purple flower droops: the golden bee, etc.

Mr. Stopford Brooke says (p. 87): "To compare the first draft of *Oenone* with the second, is not only to receive a useful lesson in the art of poetry—it is also to understand, far better than by any analysis of his life, a great part of Tennyson's character; his impatience for perfection, his steadiness in pursuit of it, his power of taking pains, the long intellectual consideration he gave to matters which originated in the emotions, his love of balancing this and that form of his thought against one another; and finally, correlative with these qualities, his want of impulse and rush in song, as in life." Mr. Brooke quotes (p. 113) the first thirteen lines of the 1832 version given above and remarks: "The blank verse halts; a hurly-burly of vowels like 'Than any in old Ionia' is a sorrowful thing; there is no careful composition of the picture; the things described have not that vital connection one with the other which should enable the imaginative eye to follow them step by step down the valley till it opens on the plain where Troy stands white, below its citadel." He then quotes the passage as it stands in the later editions, and comments: "The verse is now weighty and poised, and nobly paused—yet it moves swiftly enough. The landscape is now absolutely clear, and it is partly done by cautious additions to the original sketch. . . . Nothing can image better the actual thing than that phrase concerning a lonely peak at dawn, that 'it takes the morning'; nor the lifting and slow absorption of the mists of night when the sun slants warm into the pines of the glen, than those slow-wrought, concentrated lines about the mountain vapour."

1. This opening description is said to have been suggested by what the poet saw in the Pyrenees, which he visited in the autumn of 1831.

Ida. The mountain chain to the south of the district of Troas.

Ionian. Ionia was the name applied to a narrow strip of the coast of Asia Minor from the river Hermus, on the north, to the Meander, on the south.

3-5. Those who have seen the movements of mist on the mountains will appreciate the felicity of this description.

10. **topmost Gargarus.** The summit of Gargarus; a Latin idiom, cf. "*summus mons*." *Gargarus* is one of the highest peaks in Ida, some 5,000 feet above the sea.

11. **takes the morning.** 'Catches the first rays of the rising sun.'

13. **Ilion.** Troy.

15-16. **forlorn Of Paris.** Bereft of Paris; cf. *Par. Lost*, x., 921: "Forlorn of thee."

20. **fragment of rock** (see the corresponding line in the version of 1832).

21-22. Until the sun had sunk so low that the shadow of the mountain reached the place where Oenone was sitting.

23-24. A refrain repeated at intervals through the poem, is a frequent peculiarity of Greek idylls; cf. Theocritus, i. and ii., Moschus, *Epitaph*; the same device is found in Spenser, *Prothalamium*, and Pope, *Pastorals*, iii., etc.

24. **many-fountain'd Ida**, an exact translation of Homer, *Iliad*, viii., 47: Ἰδὴν πολυπίδακα.

25. Tennyson is indebted for many hints to the Greek Idyllic poets (see Stedman's *Victorian Poets*). Line 25, translation of Callimachus' *Lavacrum Palladis*: μεσαμβρινὰ δ' εἶχ' ὕρος ἀσυχία. (Collins' *Illustrations of Tennyson*.)

27. Cf. Theocritus, *Idyll* vii., 22: ἀνίκα δὴ καὶ σαῦρος ἐφ' αἵμασι αἰσὶ καθείδει (When, indeed, the lizard is sleeping on the wall of loose stones).

28-29. **and the cicada sleeps. The purple flowers droop.** In 1884 this was changed to: "and the winds are dead. The purple flowers droop," because, in fact, the cicada is loudest at noon.

30. Cf. *Henry VI.*, Part II., ii. 3: "Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of grief."

37. **cold crown'd snake.** Theocritus speaks of the *cold* snake; "crown'd" refers to its crest or hood. The resemblance of the crest to a crown is the probable origin of the name "basilisk," which is a diminutive formed from the Gk. word for 'king.'

38. **a River-God.** According to the myth, this river-god was Kebren (Κεβρήν).

40-42. According to the myth, the walls of Troy rose under the influence of Apollo's lyre (see Ovid, *Heroides*, xv., 179); cf. *Tithonus*,

Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Cf. also the building of Pandemonium in *Par. Lost*, i., 710.

51. **white-hooved.** The usual form would be "white-hoofed"; cf. 'hooves' for 'hoofs' in *Lady of Shalott*, 101.

52. **Simois.** One of the rivers of Troas.

53-127. Originally this passage read:

“O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.

I sate alone : the goldensandalled morn
 Rosehued the scornful hills : I sate alone
 With downdropt eyes : whitebreasted like a star
 Fronting the dawn he came : a leopard skin
 From his white shoulder drooped : his sunny hair
 Clustered about his temples like a God's :
 And his cheek brightened, as the foambow brightens
 When the wind blows the foam ; and I called out,
 “Welcome, Apollo, welcome home, Apollo,
 Apollo, my Apollo, loved Apollo.”

“Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.

He, mildly smiling, in his milkwhite palm
 Close-held a golden apple, lightningbright
 With changeful flashes, dropt with dew of Heaven
 Ambrosially smelling. From his lip,
 Curved crimson, the fullflowing river of speech
 Came down upon my heart.

“My own CEnone,

Beautifulbrowed CEnone, mine own soul,
 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
 ‘For the most fair’ in aftertime may breed
 Deep evilwilledness of heaven and sere
 Heartburning toward hallowed Iliou ;
 And all the colour of my afterlife
 Will be the shadow of today. Today
 Here and Pallas and the floating grace
 Of laughterloving Aphrodite meet
 In manyfolded Ida to receive
 This meed of beauty, she to whom my hand
 Award the palm. Within the green hillside,
 Under yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
 Is an ingoing grotto, strown with spar
 And ivymatted at the mouth, wherein
 Thou un beholden mays't behold, unheard
 Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.”

“Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.

It was the deep midnight : one silvery cloud
 Had lost his way between the piney hills.
 They came — all three — the Olympian Goddesses :
 Naked they came to the smoothswarded bower,
 Lustrous with lilyflower, violeteyed
 Both white and blue, with lotetree-fruit thickset
 Shadowed with singing pine ; and all the while,
 Above, the overwandering ivy and vine,
 This way and that in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs

With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.
 On the treetops a golden glorious cloud
 Leaned, slowly dropping down ambrosial dew.
 How beautiful they were, too beautiful
 To look upon ! but Paris was to me
 More lovelier than all the world beside.

“ ‘O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 First spake the imperial Olympian
 With archèd eyebrow smiling sovrany,
 Fulleyèd Here. She to Paris made
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule
 Unquestioned, overflowing revenue
 Wherewith to embellish state “from many a vale
 And riversundered champaign clothed with corn,
 Or upland glebe wealthy in oil and wine —
 Honour and homage, tribute, tax and toll,
 From many an inland town and haven large,
 Mast-thronged below her shadowing citadel
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.”

“ ‘O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power
 “ Which in all action is the end of all.
 Power fitted to the season, measured by
 The height of the general feeling, wisdomborn
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbour crowns
 Alliance and allegiance evermore.
 Such boon from me Heaven's Queen to thee kingborn,” etc.

48. **lawn.** Originally meant a clearing in a wood, then a meadow ;
 cf. *Lycidas*, l. 25.

55. **solitary morning.** Refers to the remoteness and aloofness of the
 first rays of direct light from the sun.

57. The light of a star becomes pale and white in the dawn. Cf. *The Princess*, iii., 1 : “morn in the white wake of the morning star,” and
Marriage of Geraint, 734 : “the white and glittering star of morn.”

61-62. The wind carries the spray into the air, and the increased
 number of watery particles which break up the rays of light, intensify
 the colour. To such rainbows, Tennyson refers in *Sea-Fairies*, and
 in *Princess*, v., 308 :

This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
 Foam of men's deeds.

66. In the fabulous gardens of the Hesperides at the western limit of
 the world were certain famous golden apples, which it was one of the
 labours of Hercules to obtain.

67. Ambrosia was the food of the Greek gods.

74. whatever Oread haunt. Imitation of a classical construction = 'any Oread that haunts.' *Oread* means 'mountain-nymph.'

76. married brows. "Eyebrows that meet," considered a great beauty by the Greeks. Cf. Theocritus, *Idyll* viii., 72: *σύνοφρυς κόρα* ('the maid of the meeting eyebrows').

80. full-faced, according to Rowe and Webb, "'not a face being absent,' or perhaps also in allusion to the majestic brows of the Gods." But the reference seems rather to be to the fact that the apple was cast *full in the face of all the Gods*. The picture presented by the words "When all—Peleus" is that of the Olympian gods facing the spectator in a long row.

81. Ranged = 'were placed in order.' Cf. *Princess*, iii., 101-2:

and gained

The terrace ranged along the northern front.

84. Delivering. For this use of the word compare *Richard II.*, iii., 3:

Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parle
Into his ruin'd ears, and thus deliver, etc.

95-98. Suggested doubtless by *Iliad*, xiv., 347-9:

τοῖσι δ' ἵπο χθων δῖα φύεν νεοθλέα ποίην
λωτον θ' ἑρσύνεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἥδ' ὑάκινθον
πυκνον καὶ μαλακόν.

('And beneath them the divine earth caused to spring up fresh new grass, and dewy lotus, and crocus, and hyacinth thick and soft').

Cf. also *Par. Lost*, iv., 710, fol.

96. Cf. *In Memoriam*, lxxxiii.: "Laburnums, dropping wells of fire."

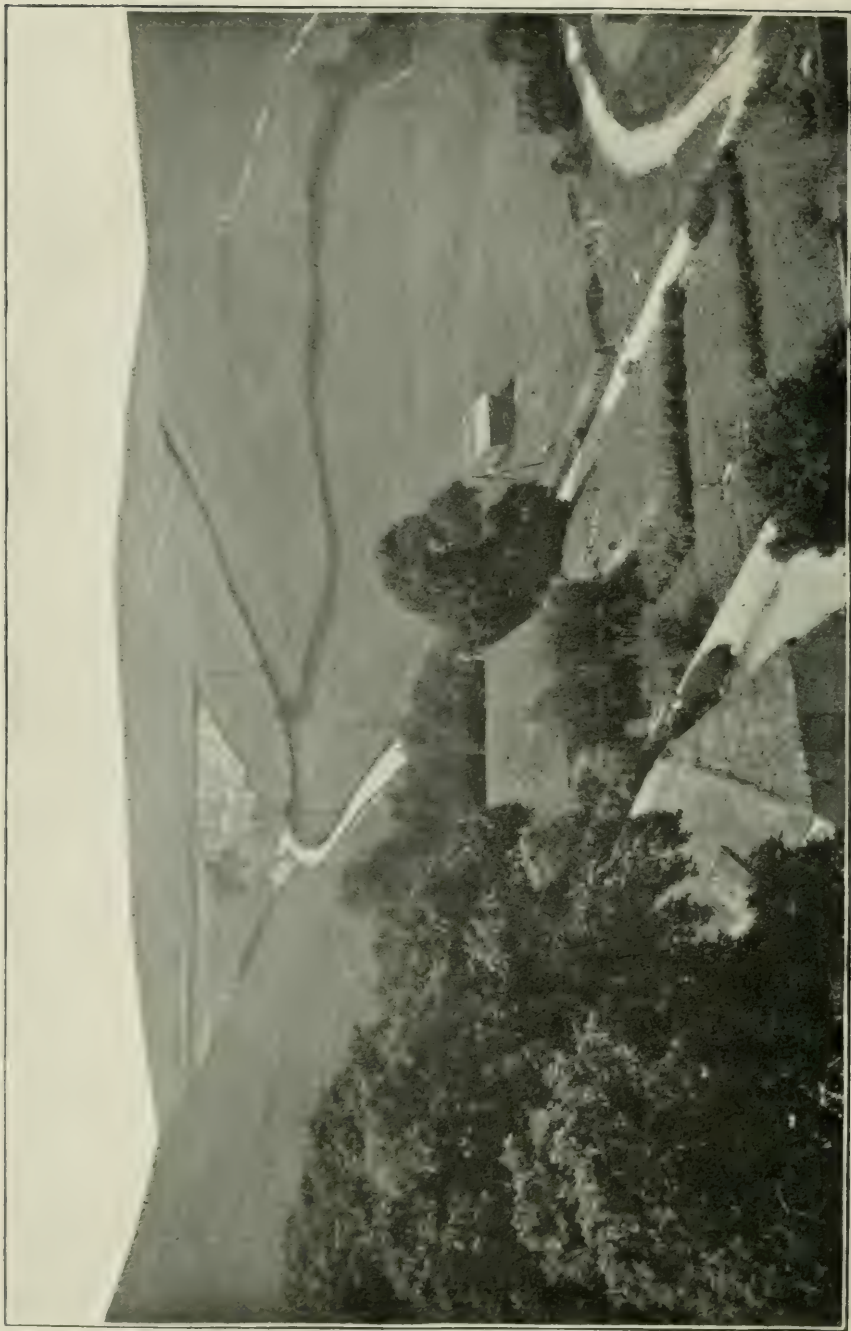
97. amaracus, and asphodel. Greek names of flowers; the former identified by some with sweet marjoram, the latter is a species of lily. In *Odyssey* ii., 539, the shades of the heroes are represented as haunting an asphodel meadow.

104. The crested peacock was sacred to Here (Juno).

105-106. Cf. *Iliad*, xiv., 350-351:—

ἐπὶ δὲ νεφέλην ἔσσαντο
καλὴν χρυσεῖην στιλπνὰ δ' ἀπέπιπτον ἔρσαι

('And they were clothed over with a cloud beauteous, golden; and from it kept falling glittering dew-drops').



A View of English Downs.

124. **throned of wisdom.** 'Power which has been attained, and is maintained by wisdom.'

128. Paris was the son of Priam, King of Troy ; but as a dream of his mother, Hecuba, indicated that the child was to bring misfortune to the city, he was exposed on Mount Ida, where he was found by a shepherd, who brought the boy up as his own son.

131. Cf. *Lucretius*, iii., 18, and the conclusion of *The Lotos-Eaters*.

137. **Flatter'd his spirit.** 'Charmed his spirit' ; cf. *Maud*, xiv., iii. : "The fancy flatter'd my mind."

139-140. 'With the spear athwart, or across, her shoulders.'

144-150. The sentiment of these five lines is characteristic of Tennyson and his work. He is the poet of self-control, moderation, duty, law, as his work is the manifestation of these very qualities ; in these respects both his theory and practice are the very opposite of some of the most poetical natures,—of Shelley, for example, with his ardour and passion. See pp. 119-120 of this volume ; also Dowden's *Studies in Literature* for a contrast between Tennyson and Browning in this regard.

144-167. In the edition of 1832, Pallas' speech read as follows :—

"Selfreverence, selfknowledge, selfcontrol
Are the three hinges of the gates of Life,
That open into power, everyway
Without horizon, bound or shadow or cloud.
Yet not for power (power of herself
Will come uncalled for) but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear,
And because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom, in the scorn of consequence.
(Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.)
Not as men value gold because it tricks
And blazons outward life with ornament,
But rather as the miser, for itself.
Good for selfgood doth half destroy selfgood.
The means and end, like two coiled snakes, infect
Each other, bound in one with hateful love.
So both into the fountain and the stream
A drop of poison falls. Come hearken to me,
And look upon me and consider me,
So shalt thou find me fairest, so endurance
Like to an athlete's arm, shall still become
Sinew'd with motion, till thine active will

(As the dark body of the Sun robed round
 With his own ever-emanating lights)
 Be flooded o'er with her own effluences,
 And thereby grown to freedom."

144, fol. Cf. *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, ll. 201, fol.

153. Sequel of guerdon. 'A reward to follow,' 'the addition of a reward.'

164-165. grow Sinew'd with. 'Become strengthened by.'

165-167. 'The mature will, having passed through all kinds of experience, and having come to be identical with law (or duty) is commensurate with perfect freedom.' To the truly disciplined will, obedience to law or duty is perfect freedom, because that is all that the perfected will desires; cf. the phrase in the Collect for Peace in the *Book of Common Prayer*, "O God . . . whose service is perfect freedom."

171. There is of course a play on the two senses of "hear," 'to apprehend by the ears' and 'to give heed to.'

172-182. In the edition of 1832 this passage read:—

"Idalian Aphrodite oceanborn,
 Fresh as the foam, newbathed in Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers upward drew
 From her warm brow and bosom her dark hair
 Fragrant and thick, and on her head upbound
 In a purple band: below her lucid neck
 Shone ivorylike, and from the ground her foot
 Gleamed rosywhite, and o'er her rounded form
 Between the shadows of the vinebunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved."

174. Idalian. So called from Idalium, a mountain city in Cyprus, reputed to be one of her favourite haunts.

175. According to the myth, Aphrodite was born of the foam of the sea. *Paphos* was a city in Cyprus where she first landed after her birth from the waves.

178. Ambrosial. The epithet is often applied by Homer to the hair of the gods, and to other things belonging to them. It may refer here to the fragrance of the hair.

187. This was Helen, wife of Menelaus, King of Lacedaemon. Paris subsequently carried her off, and this was the cause of the Trojan war, and the destruction of Troy itself.

189-191. In the ed. of 1832 :—

I only saw my Paris raise his arm
I only saw great Here's angry eyes.

208. In order to build ships for Paris' expedition to Greece, where he was to carry off Helen.

219. trembling. Refers to the *twinkling* of the stars.

222. fragments. Cf. on l. 20 above.

224. The Abominable. Eris, the goddess of strife.

245-50. She has vague premonitions of the evils to befall the city of Troy in consequence of Paris' winning the fairest wife in Greece.

258. their refers to Paris and Helen.

263. Cassandra, daughter of Priam, upon whom Apollo bestowed the gift of prophecy, with the drawback that her prophecies should never be believed. Accordingly, when she prophesied the siege and destruction of Troy, they shut her up in prison as a mad woman.

264. A fire dances before her. In Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1256, Cassandra exclaims : παπαῖ, οἶοντε πῦρ ἐπέρχεται δέ μοι (' Ah me, the fire, how it comes upon me now ').

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

First published among the poems of 1832 ; in the edition of 1842 important changes were made. The germ of the poem is contained in a few lines of the *Odyssey*, ix., 82, fol.—“ But on the tenth day we set foot on the land of the Lotos-eaters, who feed on food of flowers. . . . I sent forward ship mates to go and ask what manner of men they might be who lived in the land by bread, having picked out two men, and sent a third with them to be a herald. And they went their way forthwith and mixed with the Lotos-eaters ; so the Lotos-eaters plotted not harm to our ship mates, but gave them of lotos to eat. But whoever of them ate the honey-sweet fruit of the lotos, no longer was he willing to bring back tidings or to come back ; but there they wished to abide, feeding on the lotos with the lotos-eaters, and all forgetful of home.”

In this passage the poet found the situation, and the suggestion of languor, of indifference to active life and the ties of affection. This germ the poet has immensely developed with the help of hints from the

Greek idyllic poets, and from Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*. Further, he creates a charming landscape in harmony with, and lending emphasis to, the mood of the central human figures. The poem is largely descriptive, but the description is not intended merely to bring pictures before the mental vision, but to express a human mood and experience (see p. 112); this gives an interest and elevation which are absent from mere material descriptions which are apt soon to weary.

The opening part of the poem is written in Spenserian stanza; the large compass and slow musical movement of this stanza fit it especially for detailed description. The same form is employed in Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, and the following passages have been pointed out by Mr. Churton Collins as especially likely to have given suggestions for *The Lotos-Eaters*.

Was nought around but images of rest :
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between ;
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,
From poppies breath'd ; and beds of pleasant green
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,
And hurled everywhere their waters sheen ;
That, as they bickered through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer sky.

Lotus was a name applied to several different species of plants ; it is supposed that the species referred to in the story of the *Odyssey* is the *Zizyphus Lotus*, a low thorny shrub bearing fruit about the size of a sloe, with sweet farinaceous pulp. Herodotus at least seems (iv., 177) to identify the Lotus of the *Odyssey* with this plant.

1. **he said.** The leader of the band, i.e. Ulysses.
5. **swoon** refers to the dull, languid character of the air.
7. In 1832 this line read : "Above the valley burned the golden moon."
9. The movement of the verse with its three marked pauses and "the length and soft amplitude of the vowel sounds with liquid consonants," as Mr. Roden Noel remarks, happily echoes the sense. Cf. Milton's :

From morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve
A summer's day.

11. Tennyson, in a letter to Mr. Dawson (quoted in the preface to *A Study of "The Princess"*) says: "When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among these mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words:—

‘Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.’

When I printed this, a critic informed me that ‘lawn’ was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall and graciously added, ‘Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre but to Nature herself for his suggestions.’—And I *had* gone to Nature herself.”

Mr. Libby remarks: “Our river Rideau (curtain) was so-called by some one who had made an observation similar to Tennyson’s.”

16. In edition of 1832: “Three thunder-cloven thrones of oldest snow.”

16. **aged snow.** Snow that had lain unmelted for ages.

18. **Up-clomb.** Cf. p. 110 of this volume.

19. The sunset seemed to linger as if charmed by the beautiful scene which it was leaving.

21. **yellow down.** *Downs* are rolling hills (see note on *Lady of Shalott*, l. 3). It has been suggested that the downs are *yellow* because of the evening light, but in that case the mountains would be yellow also, whereas, the colour seems to mark out the ‘down’ from the rest of the landscape; further, ll. 15-18 seem to show that the sun was so low as only to touch the *tops* of the mountains. The *down* is probably, therefore, yellow from the character of the vegetation upon it, perhaps covered with the yellow-flowered lotus.

23. **galingale.** “Generally used of *Cyperus Longus*, one of the sedges; but the Papyrus species is here intended” (Palgrave). The papyrus is a sedge, growing in still pools, rising some 8 or 10 feet above the water, bearing on the summit of the leafless stem “a compound umbel of extremely numerous drooping spikelets with a general involucre of eight tiny filiform leaves.”

26. **rosy flame of sunset.**

31-33. The sea sounded to their ears as if breaking on some remote and unknown shore.

34. The voices of the dead were supposed to be shrill and weak ; so Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi., 492, speaks of their voices as *exiguam vocem*, so Theocritus, xiii., 59. Shakespeare (*Hamlet I.*, 1) says : "the sheeted dead Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

38. The sun was setting in the west, the moon rising in the east (see l. 7).

CHORIC SONG.

The narrative stanza of Spenser is now changed to the varied metre of a choral ode, to suit the varying feelings to which lyric expression is to be given. The theme is the folly of struggle with the difficulties of life—let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die. The same theme had already been treated in similar verse by Tennyson in *The Sea-Fairies* of 1830.

49. *gleaming* refers, according to Rowe and Webb, to the reflections of light from particles of mica, quartz, etc., in the granite ; but, doubtless, as Mr. Sykes notes, the reference is to the reflections of the light of the sky upon the water.

51. Rolfe prints "tired" in both places in this line and observes : "All the eds. print 'tir'd' in both places contrary to Tennyson's rule not to use the apostrophe when the verb ends in *e*." But Tennyson, no doubt, used the apostrophe to prevent mistakes. "Tir'd" of course represents two syllables in the line, but the effect is obtained by dwelling on the *ir* ; to pronounce *tiréd* injures the sound effect.

53-56. Note the effect produced through lengthening each successive line by one metrical foot.

56. The narcotic properties of the poppy (from one species opium is made) associate it with sleep.

57. The whole of this choric song is full of touches which resemble and may have been suggested by the pastoral poets ; many of these parallels may be found in Collins and Stedman ; in some cases the resemblance is very close, *e.g.*, compare this stanza with the following from Bion, *Idyll v.*, 11-15 :

εἰς πόσον ἄ δειλοὶ καμάτως κ' εἰς ἔργα πονέυμες;
 ψυχὰν δ' ἄχρῃ τινος ποτὶ κέρδεα καὶ ποτὶ τέχνας
 βάλλομες, μειροντες αἰὲ πολὺ πλῆγονος ὀλβῷ;
 λαθομεθ' ἢ ἄρα πάντες ὅτι θνατοὶ γενόμεσθα
 χάς βραχὺν ἐκ Μοίρας λάχομεν χρόνον

translated by Lang: "Wretched men and weary that we are, how sorely we toil, how greatly we cast our souls away on gain, and laborious arts, continually coveting yet more wealth! Surely we have all forgotten that we are men condemned to die, and how short is the hour, that to us is allotted by Fate."

66. slumber's holy balm. Macbeth (Act ii., 1) speaks of "the innocent sleep balm of hurt minds."

73. Cf. *Matthew*, vi., vv. 25 fol.

84. Mr. Collins compares *Aen.* iv., 451: *taedet coeli convexa tueri*. (It is a weariness to behold the vault of heaven).

94, fol. Mr. Collins compares Moschus, *Idyll*, v.:

ἦ κακὸν ὃ γριπεὺς ζῶει βίον, ᾧ δόμος ἄ ναῦς
 καὶ πόνος ἐστὶ θάλασσα
 αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γλυκὺς ὕπνος ὑπὸ πλατάνῃ βαθυφύλλῳ,
 καὶ παγὰς φιλέοιμι τὸν ἐγγύθεν ἦχον ἀκούειν
 ἃ τέρπει ψοφέοισα τὸν ἄγριον ὄνυχι ταράσσει

translated by Lang: "Surely an evil life lives the fisherman, whose home is his ship, and his labours are in the sea. Nay, sweet to me is sleep beneath the broad-leaved plane-tree; let me love to listen to the murmur of the brook hard by, soothing, not troubling, the husbandman with his sound."

95. Mr. Collins compares *Aen.* i., 381: *conscendi navibus aequor*, and *Othello*, ii., 1: "And let the labouring barque climb hills of seas."

102. amber light. See l. 19.

106. crisping ripples. "Wavelets that curl at the edges. Cf. *Claribel*, 'The babbling runnel crispeth.' Milton has 'crisped brooks' in *Par. Lost*, iv." (Rowe and Webb).

106-7. These two lines exemplify Tennyson's power of presenting the minuter phenomena of nature in picturesque phrase.

109. mild-minded melancholy. This phrase had been already employed by Tennyson in a suppressed sonnet of his, printed in the *Englishman's Magazine* for August, 1831.

114. This stanza was added in the edition of 1842; note that it introduces one of the most human touches in the poem.

118. **inherit us.** 'Have succeeded to our possessions.'

120. **island princes, etc.** 'The princes of Ithaca and the neighbouring islands, which were their homes.' The state of things represented in ll. 120-123 did, according to the *Odyssey*, exist in Ithaca.

133. In the ed. of 1832 this line read: "O propt on lavish beds," etc.

amaranth. A fabulous flower which (as the etymology indicates) never faded, so Milton speaks of "immortal amaranth," *Par. Lost*, iii., 353.

moly. Another fabulous plant with magic virtues, given by Hermes to Ulysses as a counter-charm to the draught of Circe. Cf. *Ody.*, x., 305, and Milton, *Comus*, 636.

134. **lowly** is used as if the adverbial form from "low," as in *The Lady of Shalott*, 146.

136. **dark and holy.** "Shaded with clouds and wrapt in religious calm" (Rowe and Webb). But the suggestion of 'clouds' seems out of keeping with the context. The darkness is rather that of the "dark-blue sky" (l. 84) contrasted with the brightness of the landscape (l. 137).

139. **dewy echoes.** The epithet is vague but suggestive, after the manner of Keats; dewy cannot properly be applied to echoes; it seems to suggest the sound of waterfalls dashing into spray.

141. **watch.** Originally "hear."

142. **wov'n acanthus-wreath divine.** 'Through the masses of acanthus foliage.' *Acanthus*, a plant with graceful pendant leaves whose form is familiar to us in the capital of Corinthian columns. *Divine* presumably 'divinely beautiful.' Cf. *Madeline*, ii., "Light glooming over eyes divine."

145. **barren.** Originally read "flowery."

148. **alley.** Milton also uses "alley" of the natural passages in the woods in *Comus*, 311.

149. **the yellow Lotos-dust.** 'The pollen of the Lotos flowers.'

149. Note the metrical effect produced by beginning the lines with the stressed syllable; this gives an animation in keeping with a change of tone in the singers, who now make up their minds as to their course.

150. The whole passage from this line to the end was re-written and greatly improved in 1842. Originally it stood :

" We have had enough of motion,
 Weariness and wild alarm,
 Tossing on the tossing ocean,
 Where the tusked seahorse walloweth
 In a stripe of grassgreen calm,
 At noon tide beneath the lea ;
 And the monstrous narwhale swalloweth
 His foamfountains in the sea,
 Long enough the winedark wave our weary bark did carry.
 This is lovelier and sweeter,
 Men of Ithaca, this is meeter,
 In the hollow rosy vale to tarry,
 Like a dreamy Lotos-eater, a delirious Lotos-eater !
 We will eat the Lotos, sweet
 As the yellow honeycomb,
 In the valley some, and some
 On the ancient heights divine ;
 And no more roam,
 On the loud hoar foam,
 To the melancholy home
 At the limit of the brine,
 The little isle of Ithaca, beneath the day's decline.
 We'll lift no more the shattered oar,
 No more unfurl the straining sail ;
 With the blissful Lotos-eaters pale
 We will abide in the golden vale
 Of the Lotos-land, till the Lotos fail ;
 We will not wander more.
 Hark ! how sweet the horned ewes bleat
 On the solitary steeps,
 And the merry lizard leaps,
 And the foamwhite waters pour ;
 And the dark pine weeps,
 And the lithe vine creeps,
 And the heavy melon sleeps
 On the level of the shore :
 Oh ! islanders of Ithaca, we will not wander more.
 Surely, surely slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
 Than labour in the ocean, and rowing with the oar.
 Oh ! islanders of Ithaca, we will return no more."

In regard to this change Mr. Stopford Brooke says (*Tennyson: His Art and Relation to Modern Life*, p. 123): "Instead of the jingling, unintellectual, merely fanciful ending of the poem of 1833, every image of which wanders hither and thither without clear purpose and weakens the impression of the previous part, the poem thus closing in a feeble

anti-climax, we have the weighty, solemn, thoughtful, classic close, embodying the Epicurean conception of the Gods, bringing all Olympus down into harmony with the indifferent dreaming of the Lotos-eaters, but leaving in our minds the sense of a dreadful woe tending on those who dream; for what the gods do with impunity, man may not do. Yet, even the Lotos-eating Gods inevitable fate awaits. This is the work of a great artist, and in this steady improvement of his poems Tennyson stands almost alone. Other poets, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, did not recast their poems in this wholesale fashion, and the additions and changes which they made were by no means always improvements. Tennyson, working with his clear sense of what was artistic, and with the stately steadiness which belonged to his character, not only improved but doubled the value of the poems he altered."

152. **the wallowing monster**, etc. The whale would answer to the description (see l. 7 of the passage quoted on l. 150).

153. **equal mind**. A classic phrase; cf. Horace, *Od.*, ii., 3,

aequam memento rebus in arduis
servare mentem.

154. **hollow**. 'Consisting of a valley,' or 'full of valleys'; cf. opening description.

155, fol. The calmness and indifference of the Gods was a notion of the Epicureans and is depicted by Lucretius, *De Rer. Nat.*, iii., 15 fol. (see note on *Morte d'Arthur*, l. 260); another parallel to this passage is cited from Goethe, *Iph. auf Tauris*, iv.

156. **nectar** and ambrosia was the proper diet of the Olympian divinities.

158. **golden houses**. "The epithet 'golden' is often used by Homer of the gods and all their belongings" (Rowe and Webb).

164. So Macbeth (Act v., sc. 1) calls life "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

167. **little dues**. The small returns which they get from sowing the seed, etc.

168. **hell**. 'Hades' where Greek story represents Ixion, Tantalus, etc., suffering endless torments.

169. **Elysian valleys**. *Elysium* or the Elysian fields is described in

Homer as the habitation of heroes after death—the Greek heaven (see *Ody.*, iv., 563).

170. **asphodel.** See note on *Oenone*, l. 95.

‘YOU ASK ME WHY, THO’ ILL AT EASE.’

This and the two following pieces were first published in 1842, but we are told that they were written in 1833. The poem before us exhibits the poet’s pride in his country, and in that steady development of her political institutions—that combined conservatism and progress—which distinguishes her history. Tennyson’s satisfaction, upon the whole, with his country may be contrasted with the bitter attacks of Byron and Shelley on the social and political condition of England in their day. The difference in Tennyson’s attitude is mainly due to his character and temperament, but partly to the change in the general tone and condition of the country since the close of the era of repression which had existed during the Napoleonic wars, and during the time when the opinions of Byron and Shelley were maturing.

2. **this region.** England. There is a reference to its misty climate in the following line, as compared with the more brilliant atmosphere of “the South.”

6. **sober-suited Freedom.** Not a showy freedom since it does not exhibit itself in institutions strikingly democratic; the English constitution may not commend itself to those who seek for external forms markedly popular, but it contains the substance of freedom.

11. Originally this line read “broadens slowly.”

11-12. English history is full of examples of this, both in politics and law. Compare Macaulay’s famous comments on the Revolution of 1688 towards the close of chap. x. of his *History*.

19. ‘When freedom of opinion in the individual is considered a crime against society.’

23-24. As the first two lines of the stanza refer to increase in power, so these to increase in wealth.

24. The line read originally “should almost choke.”

‘OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS.’

1-4. Of old, freedom was not actually realized in human society, but existed as an ideal out of the reach of man ; so the poet represents her as dwelling on the heights amidst the unfettered play of the great forces of nature ; cf. the close of Coleridge’s *France*, where the poet finds Liberty, not among men, but in nature, “The guide of homeless winds and playmate of the waves.”

6. ‘Self-contained and prepared for that future growth of liberty which she foresees.’

7-8. ‘Earlier men had some partial perception and experience of freedom.’

14. isle-altar. Britain.

15-16. The poet has in mind, perhaps, the common representation of Britannia with the trident in her hand to symbolize the dominion of the sea. The trident is the symbol of Neptune, hence “God-like.” Cf. also the common representation of Jove with the triple thunder-bolt in his hands, e.g., Ovid. *Metamor.*, ii., 848 :

Ille pater rectorque deum, cui dextra trisulcis
Ignibus armata est, qui nutu concutit orbem.

‘LOVE THOU THY LAND, WITH LOVE FAR-BROUGHT.’

This poem is an expansion of the concluding lines immediately preceding. It was written soon after the passing of the first Reform Bill—a time of hopefulness, for the extreme tension had been relieved by a bloodless revolution—a time of anxiety for moderate thinkers, as initiating, perhaps, a too rapid transfer of power to the hands of an ignorant democracy.

3-4. but transfused, etc. ‘The true patriot will take thought for the possibilities of future development.’ Cf. lines 15 and 16 of “You ask me why.”

14. the ray. ‘The ray of knowledge’—as indicated by next stanza.

17-20. Cf. the Prologue to *In Memoriam* :

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.

and the whole of No. cxiv. in the same poem.

19. **sky.** 'Climate,' 'region.' 'Sky' is the subject of the subjunctive "bear" in the next line.

22-24. 'Do not compromise at all with your own prejudices, but in the treatment of what may seem the prejudices of others, be more considerate.'

26-27. **neither count on praise**, etc. The highest work is not wont to win immediate fame ; that comes later when time has tested what is really praiseworthy : cf. *Luke*, xi., 48 : "Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them."

28. **watch-words.** Phrases which embody some prevalent idea, as "The brotherhood of man," "The unity of the empire." Lines 29 and 30 are an expansion of line 28. The poet means that we should not allow our judgment to be blinded by enthusiasm for some specious and widely accepted generalization.

33. **That** is a relative pronoun referring to "law." A good law will be the result of discussions which will have exposed all its aspects ; it will, in consequence, represent and serve to bind together the interests of various classes ; and, as corresponding to felt needs, will be a living and effective force, not a mere dead letter on the statute-book.

36. **close.** 'Include' ; cf. *To the Queen* :

A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen.

37. **cold and warm**, etc. There is a reference to the old idea of nature being composed of four elements. Cf. Milton's description of Chaos, *Par. Lost*, II., 892 :

For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce
Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms.

45-48. 'The new must adjust itself to that which is passing away' ("that which flies"). There seems to be awkwardness and incongruity in the expression of this stanza.

50-52. The realization of new ideas in practice has usually been accompanied with violence.

61. 'The forms of government which are to preside over future developments.'

67-68. The image is that of a hurricane carried over the face of the earth accompanied by Discord.

69. 'This storm of violence will hasten the destruction of the institutions which you have idolized.'

74. 'In these later years of the world's history, as well as in former times.'

87. Cf. *Matthew*, x., 34: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword."

94. 'As we profit by those who have gone before.'

95. **Earn well the thrifty months.** 'Deserve well the months during which something may be laid up for the future.' But perhaps the poet uses "earn" with something of the sense of "harvest"; in provincial English, it is said to have the sense 'glean,' and is etymologically connected with Ger. "ernte," meaning 'harvest'.

THE EPIC

AND THE EPILOGUE (ll. 273-303).

The lines under *The Epic* were written by the poet (and are included in these Selections) merely as an introduction to the *Morte d'Arthur*. The abrupt opening and fragmentary character of the latter poem seemed to need an explanation, just as certain peculiarities of the story of *The Princess* require an explanation, and in both cases Tennyson makes use of a setting—a prologue and epilogue. Lines 27-28 need not be taken as literally true of Tennyson; it is extremely unlikely that he had written twelve books on the story of Arthur, but they do indicate that *Morte d'Arthur* is only portion of a larger scheme which was subsequently realized in *Idylls of the King*. Mrs. Ritchie quotes Tennyson as saying: "When I was twenty-four, I meant to write a whole great poem on it (the Arthurian story), and began it in the *Morte d'Arthur*. I said I should do it in twenty years but the reviews stopped me. By Arthur I always meant the soul, and by the Round Table the passions and

capacities of man. There is no grander subject in the world than King Arthur." Here the poet, besides telling that, when he wrote *Morte d'Arthur*, he had the larger scheme in his mind, also asserts the symbolic nature of the poem; and this is a point to which *The Epic* and epilogue before us draw attention. The imaginary audience in *The Epic* are interested in the most modern questions, 'geology and schism,' etc., and old things are passing away. This is true also of Tennyson's real audience and the real world. To such an audience the poet comes with a story from old 'heroic times,' fashioned after the manner of the father of poetry, Homer; what interest can it have for them? The answer is hinted at, in the epilogue (276, fol.); Tennyson insinuates (modesty forbids him to put his claim openly): first, that there is perhaps a certain charm in the style (a charm which every reader will grant); second, that there is something of modern thought in the poem—it is not a mere description of external events as Homer's account would have been, but contains something of a deeper significance. In the dream (288, fol.) Tennyson gives a further hint that some, at least, of these "modern touches" are conveyed through symbolism. Arthur according to the old story was to come again; he did not really die. The poet seizes upon this to point the moral of his tale, which is contained in lines 240-241:

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.

His hearers say the old honour is gone from Christmas (*The Epic*, l. 7), there is a general decay in faith (l. 18); the poet substantially answers: "Not so, your decay is not real decay, but change, development. The old ideals pass away, but only to give place to higher ones; the old English ideal, King Arthur, has gone, but reappears in nobler form—the 'modern gentleman'; and so we can confidently anticipate in future generations (297, fol.) a continual progress to perfection." *The Epic* opens with the lament that Christmas is gone, but the Epilogue closes with the ringing of bells that announce that Christmas still exists; old customs connected with it may indeed be passing away, but the real essence of the Christmas festival still abides. One may compare the well-known lyric from *In Memoriam*, "Ring out wild bells" (cvi.):

Ring out a slowly dying cause
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Morte d'Arthur therefore represents some of the most characteristic aspects of the poet's thought (as well as the most characteristic beauties of his style)—his faith in human progress, his belief in development,—in a slow and steady development in which the old does not pass away, but reshapes itself to new forms in accordance with new conditions.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

This poem was first published in the volumes of 1842; Edward Fitzgerald states that it was read to him from MS. in 1835, and then lacked introduction and epilogue. Again he says, "Mouthing out his hollow oes and aes, deep-chested music, this is something as A. T. reads . . . His voice very deep and deep-chested, but rather murmuring than mouthing, like the sound of a far sea or of a pine-wood, I remember, greatly struck Carlyle." Tennyson, according to his son (Life, I, p. 194), warned his readers "not to press too hardly on details whether for history or for allegory."

In 1869, when the greater number of *The Idylls of the King* had been written, Tennyson took this poem out of its setting, prefixed 169 lines, and added 30 at the close, in order to fit it to be the conclusion of the series of *Idylls of the King* in this shape it is entitled *The Passing of Arthur*. The added lines serve to make the connection with the other idylls closer, and to bring out the symbolic meaning, which in the earlier form had not, in the body of the poem, been very prominent; indeed, *Morte d'Arthur* may, according to the feelings of some readers at least, be best enjoyed without thought of symbolism. The style of the *Morte d'Arthur* is unlike, and (in the present editor's opinion) superior, to that of the other idylls—the blank verse more stately, and less familiar in its rhythms, the style more terse and restrained. Apart from particular imitations of phrase and turns of

expression, the Homeric quality lies in the dignified flow of the verse, in the terseness and clearness yet impressiveness of the style, and, to some degree, in the nature of the theme; but Mr. Brimley is undoubtedly right when he says: "They are rather Virgilian than Homeric echoes; elaborate and stately, not naive and eager to tell the story; rich in pictorial detail; carefully studied; conscious of their own art; more anxious for beauty of workmanship than interest of action" (Brimley's *Essays*, p. 34). In this poem and in *Ulysses*, Tennyson's blank verse is at its best. Tennyson is one of the most successful employers of narrative blank verse. The great model in this species had been Milton; but his long and resonant periods, his rhythm attained largely by the use of sonorous polysyllables, were little suited to the treatment of themes less grand than his own. Accordingly, the poets of the 18th century who used blank verse in narrative, were constantly falling into pompous rhetoric, or into homely and unrhythmical lines differing little from prose. Tennyson, making use of some models he found in Keats, developed a blank verse of his own, in which by a careful adjustment of the pauses within the lines, an avoidance of *diaeresis* (i.e., the coincidence of word endings, with foot-endings), etc., he attained smoothly-flowing verses without the use of polysyllables, and a periodic rhythm less prolonged and involved than Milton's.

The source of *Morte d'Arthur* is Sir Thomas Malory's version of the Arthurian legends—a book entitled *Morte d'Arthur*, written about 1570. The original is followed with remarkable closeness in parts, and the comparison is so interesting that we quote the whole (viz., chap. v. of Bk. xxi.) :—

Ah, Sir Launcelot, said king Arthur, this day have I sore missed thee. Alas, that ever I was against thee, for now have I my death, whereof Sir Gawaine me warned in my dream. Then Sir Lucan took up the king the one part, and Sir Bedivere the other part, and in the lifting, the king swooned, and Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with the lift, that the part of his bowels fell out of his body, and therewith the noble knight's heart brast. And when king Arthur came to himself again, he beheld Sir Lucan how he lay foaming at the mouth, and part of his bowels lay at his feet. Alas, said the king, this is unto me a full heavy sight to see this noble duke so die for my sake, for he would have holpen me that had more need of help than I. Alas, he would not complain him, his heart was so set to help me. Now Jesu have mercy upon his soul. Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me: for, wit thou well, and I might live myself, the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore; but my time hieth fast, said the king. Therefore, said Arthur, take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there, I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again, and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedivere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again. So Sir Bedivere

departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and haft were all of precious stones, and then he said to himself, If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And as soon as he might he came again unto the king, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword into the water. What sawest thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king; therefore go thou lightly again, and do my command as thou art to me lief and dear, spare not, but throw it in. Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand; and then him thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword; and so oft he hid the sword, and returned again, and told to the king that he had been at the water, and done his commandment. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but the waters wap and the waves wan. Ah traitor, untrue, said king Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have wend that thou that hast been to me so lief and dear, and thou art named a noble knight, and would betray me for the riches of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands, for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead. Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and went to the water side, and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might, and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long. Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw king Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king: and so he did softly. And there received him three queens with great mourning, and so they set him down, and in one of their laps king Arthur laid his head, and then that queen said, Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas, this wound on your head hath caught overmuch cold. And so then they rowed from the land; and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried, Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies. Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in. For I will into the vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous wound. And if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul. But ever the queens and the ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest, and so he went all that night, and in the morning he was ware betwixt two holts hoar of a chapel and an hermitage.

1. So refers to a supposed preceding portion, *Morte d'Arthur* being, as indicated in *The Epic*, a mere fragment.

3. King Arthur's table. The famous "Round Table" with its 150 seats. After it was named the order of knights established by Arthur,

A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time,

—Guinevere.

4. **Lyonnesse.** A fabulous country extending from Cornwall to the Sicily Isles, and supposed to have been subsequently submerged by the sea.

6. **bold Sir Bedivere.** "Bold" is a permanent epithet that is connected with Sir Bedivere when there is no reason in the context for calling attention to that particular quality. Such permanent epithets are especially common in Homer, so Achilles is *ποδάρκης* (swift footed), Ulysses *πολύμητις* (crafty), etc. In Virgil *pious* is a frequent epithet of Aeneas; in Scott, William of Deloraine is "good at need."

7. This line is omitted in *The Passing of Arthur*, the only change the poet made in the original poem when he developed *Morte d'Arthur* into *The Passing of Arthur*.

9. **chancel.** Properly, the eastern portion of the church containing the choir and altar, often railed off from the main part of the edifice.

12. **a great water.** "This phrase has probably often been ridiculed as affected phraseology for 'a great lake'; but it is an instance of the intense presentative power of Mr. Teunyson's genius. It precisely marks the appearance of a large lake outspread and taken in at one glance from a high ground. Had 'a great lake' been substituted for it, the phrase would have needed to be translated by the mind into water of a certain shape and size, before the picture was realized by the imagination. 'A great lake' is, in fact, one degree removed from the sensuous to the logical,—from the individual appearance to the generic name, and is, therefore, less poetic and pictorial" (Brimley). The word "water" is used in the same sense by Malory (see iv., 6).

21. **Camelot.** See note on *Lady of Shalott*, l. 5.

23. **Merlin.** The famous enchanter; he received Arthur at his birth, and reappears repeatedly in the legends; he is one of the chief characters in the *Idyll Merlin and Vivien*.

23-24. Cf. *The Coming of Arthur*, where this prophecy in regard to Arthur is referred to—

And Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn,
Though men may wound him, that he will not die,
But pass, and come again.

27. **Excalibur.** The word is said to be of Celtic origin and to mean 'cut-steel'; Spenser calls Arthur's sword *Morddure*, i.e., 'the hard-biter.' In the stories of chivalry, the sword, spear, etc., of the heroes,

which often possessed magical powers, have commonly special names. In the following stanza from Longfellow, the names of the swords of Charlemagne, The Cid, Orlando, Arthur, and Lancelot are successively mentioned :

It is the sword of a good Knight,
Tho' homespun be his mail ;
What matter if it be not bright
Joyeuse, Colada, Durindale,
Excalibar, or Aroundight.

In *The Coming of Arthur*, l. 295, Excalibur is described :

the sword

That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur row'd across and took it—rich
With jewels—elfin Urim, on the hilt,
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it—on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
"Take me," but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
"Cast me away !"

31. **samite** is a rich silk stuff interwoven with threads of gold and silver.

37. **middle mere**. 'Middle of the mere.' Tennyson is imitating a common Latin construction ; cf. note on *Oenone*, 10.

38. **lightly**. 'Nimbly,' 'quickly' ; the word is used frequently by Malory. See pp. 155-6 above.

43. **hest**. 'Command' ; frequent in Shakespeare, etc.

48-51. Note the variations of consonants, vowels, and pauses in this line to give sound effects in keeping with the sense.

51. **levels**. "The classic *aequora* may have suggested the 'shining levels,' but there is a deeper reason for the change of phrase, for the great water as seen from the high ground, becomes a series of flashing surfaces when Sir Bedivere looks along it from its margin" (Brimley). Cf. Virgil, *Georgics I*, 469 : *tellus quoque et aequora*.

55. **keen with frost**. We connect frost with transparency of the air, and the transparency of the air made the moonlight clearer.

56. **diamond sparks**. "The eds. down to 1853 have 'diamond studs'" (Rolfe).

57. **Jacinth.** Another form of hyacinth; the name is applied to a bright coloured, transparent variety of zircon of various shades of red passing into orange.

60. Now looking at one side of the question, now at another. The line is a translation of *Aeneid*, iv., 285: *Atque animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc.*

61. **In act to throw.** Cf. *The Princess*, ii., 429: "A tiger-cat In act to spring." "An expression much used by Pope in his translation of the *Iliad*. Cf. *Il.* iii., 349, ὀρνυτο χαλκῶ, which Pope renders—

Atreides then his massy lance prepares,
In act to throw."

(Rowe and Webb).

63. **the many-knotted waterflags.** This refers presumably to the iris which, with its blue and yellow flowers and sword shaped leaves, is so common near streams, pools, etc. What the poet refers to by "many-knotted" is not clear. Mr. Sykes enumerates the explanations in his note: "(1) The rootstalk of the flag which shows additional bulbs from year to year; (2) the joints in the flower stalks, of which some half-dozen may be found in each stalk; (3) the large seed-pods that terminate the stalks, a very noticeable feature when the plant is sere; (4) the various bunches or knots of iris in a bed of the plants, so that the whole phrase suggests a thickly matted bed of flags. I favour the last interpretation, though Tennyson's fondness of technical accuracy in his references makes the second more than possible."

70-71. "The ripple washing in the reeds," and the "wild water lapping on the crags" are "two phrases marking exactly the difference of sound produced by water swelling up against a permeable or impermeable barrier" (Brimley).

73. 'Thou hast been false to thy natural honesty, and to thy title of knight.' Cf. Malory: "And thou art named a noble knight and would betray me for the riches of the sword."

80. **lief.** 'Dear' (A. S. leof), used by Chaucer (*e.g.*, *Troylus and Cryseide*, iii., l. 596: "myn uncle lief and dere"), Spenser, etc., but now obsolete except in the colloquial phrase, "I had as lief."

86. **chased.** 'Engraved with ornamental designs.'

103-106. Malory, i., 22, tells how Arthur first saw the Lady of the Lake: "So they rode till they came to a lake, the which was a fair

water and broad, and in the midst of the lake Arthur was ware of an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in that hand. Lo, said Merlin, yonder, is that sword that I spake of. With that they saw a damsel going upon the lake: What damsel is that, said Arthur. That is the Lady of the Lake, said Merlin; and within that lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a place as any upon earth and richly beseen."

110. **conceit.** Used, as often in Shakespeare, in the original sense of 'conception,' 'idea'; cf. *Merch. of Venice*, iii., 4, 2: "You have a noble and a true conceit of godlike amity."

112. The repetition of lines and phrases is Homeric.

122. Tennyson is fond of this bold metaphor; cf. *In Memoriam*, ix.: "Till all my widow'd race be run," *Aylmer's Field*, 720: "I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls."

125. 'Who shouldst perform all the services which belonged to them severally.'

129. **for.** 'Since': a use of *for* common in Shakespeare, e.g., *Richard III.*, ii., 2, 85 (see Abbot's *Shakespearian Grammar*, § 151).

139. **a streamer of the northern morn.** A ray of the Aurora Borealis (Aurora = dawn, Borealis = northern). Cf. Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, iv., 9:

Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north.

140. **the moving isles**, etc. Icebergs; the aurora is more conspicuous in northern latitudes.

171. **Remorsefully.** 'With pity.' *Remorse* is employed by Shakespeare in sense of 'pity'; so *Merch. of Ven.*, iv., 1, 20:

Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty.

and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv., 3, 13:

O Eglamour thou art a gentleman
Valiant, wise, remorseful, well accomplish'd.

182. His breath, made visible by the frosty air, clung about him.

183. The effect that mist has in enlarging the apparent size of objects is a matter of common experience, cf. *Guinevere*, 597:

The moony vapour rolling round the King,
Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold.

186. **Dry** clash'd. We speak of *liquid* sounds; *dry* as applied to sounds means harsh and abrupt. The metaphor is suggested by classical phrases; so in *Iliad*, xiii., 409: *καρφαλέον ἀσπίς ἄνσε* ('the shield rang dry' when struck by a spear); *Lucretius*, vi., 119, uses *aridus sonus* (dry sound) in reference to certain kinds of thunder; again *Virgil Georg. I.*, 357-8: *aridus fragor*. Cf. *The Voyage*, l. 10:

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail.

harness. 'Body-armour'—the original meaning of the word. Cf. *Macbeth*, v., 5, 52: "At least we'll die with harness on our back."

186-90. Similar sound-effects in frosty air are noted by Wordsworth, *Influence of Natural Objects*:—

With the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud,
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron.

192. 'The reflections of the moon on the water.'

193. **hove.** For 'hove in sight'; from *heave* 'to rise,' as in Gray's *Elegy*: "Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap"; the phrase is applied to a vessel *rising* above the horizon.

197. **Black-stoled.** *Stole* is a long loose robe reaching to the feet; cf. *Sir Galahad*, 43.

199. **shiver'd.** Cf. *The Princess*, iii., 73: "Consonant chords that shiver to one note." In the present passage the word seems to convey not only the idea of vibration, but also of shrillness.

tingling. As if the stars had nerves which thrilled in response.

202-3. The details are very effective in suggesting a picture of utter desolation.

209. **casque.** 'Helmet.'

214. **the springing east.** 'The rising sun.' Cf. p. 110, 2nd sentence.

215. **greaves.** See note on *Lady of Shalott*, l. 76.

cuisses. Armour for the thighs; cf. *I. Hen. IV.*, iv., 1, 105: "His cuisses on his thighs."

235. Cf. Malory, xiv., 2: "Also Merlin made the Round Table in tokening of the roundness of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right."

240-1 These two lines give expression to the inner sense of the poem.
Cf. *In Memoriam*, Prologue :

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

242. In order that men may develop, and not stagnate, there is need of change. Even good customs are apt to degenerate into mere formalities, and to hamper the growth of the human spirit.

244-5. "May God accept my work and, absorbing it, as it were, into Himself, purify it of all its unworthy elements" (Rowe and Webb).

254. The idea of the earth being bound to the heavens by a gold chain is an old one, and has been supposed to originate with Homer (*Iliad*, viii., 25-26). It is found in *Par. Lost*, ii., 1051, in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, there is an allusion to it : "According to the allegory of the poets the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair," and in Hare's Sermon on the Law of Self-Sacrifice : "This is the golden chain of love, whereby the whole creation is bound to the throne of the Creator."

259. Malory speaks in one passage of a valley and in others of an island of Avilion—mere places of earth, however ; but in Celtic legend the name is connected with the habitation of the blest, and it is in that sense that the poet uses it here.

260. Cf. the description of Elysium, *Odyssey*, vi., 42 :

ὅθι φασὶ θεῶν ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
ἔμμεναι οὔτ' ἀνέμοισι τινάσσεται οὔτε ποτ' ὄμβρῳ
δεύεται οὔτε χιῶν ἐπιπιλνᾶται

(Where, they say, the seat of the Gods abideth sure, nor is it shaken by winds or ever wetted by shower, nor does snow come near it.)

and *Lucretius*, iii., 18-22 :—

apparet divum numen sedesque quietae
quas neque concutiant venti nec nubila nimbis
aspergunt neque nix acri concreta pruina
cana cadens violat semperque innubilis aether
integrit.

(The divinity of the gods is revealed and their tranquil abodes which neither winds do shake nor clouds drench with rains nor snow congealed by sharp frost harms with hoary fall : an ever-cloudless aether o'ercanopies them.)

and Tennyson himself in *Lucretius* :—

The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interspaces of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow.

218. **High from the daïs-throne.** ‘As he sat elevated on the daïs-throne.’

223. In the later *Idylls of the King*, the poet's conception of Arthur changes somewhat; and he represents his hero as indifferent about his success in tournaments; he is inferior in this respect to Lancelot (see *Gareth and Lynette*, 485-6), but excels in real battle; cf. *Lancelot and Elaine*, ll. 310, fol.

232. Cf. *Matthew* ii., 1-11: “Now when Jesus was born . . . behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying where is he that is born King of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him . . . And, lo, the star which they saw in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was . . . And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.”

234. **Round Table.** See note on l. 3.

262. **Deep-meadow'd.** A translation of βαθύλειμος (*Iliad*, ix, 151).

happy. The commentators compare Virgil's “laetas segetes” (glad harvest).

263. **crown'd with summer sea.** Cf. *Odyssey*, x., 195: νῆσον, τὴν περὶ πόντος ἀπείριτος ἐστεφάνωται (an island round which the infinite sea has made a crown).

267. **fluting.** ‘Singing with flute-like notes.’ The notion of the swan singing before death is very ancient; it is found in Virgil, Pliny, etc.; cf. *Othello*, v., 2: “I will play the swan and die in music,” Tennyson's *Dying Swan*, etc.

268. **Ruffles.** Refers to the slight opening out of the wings when the swan swims.

269. **swarthy webs.** ‘The dark webbed feet.’

ULYSSES.

This poem was first published in 1842, and has remained unaltered. Among the Greeks who fought against Troy, Ulysses was conspicuous, especially for fortitude, wisdom, and craft. On his return voyage to Ithaca, he gave offence to Poseidon (Neptune), and was in consequence delayed by numerous misfortunes. These adventures are the subject of the *Odyssey*, which represents him as finally restored to his kingdom and his faithful wife Penelope.

Tennyson, in the poem before us, accepts this character, but represents the hero after his return dominated in his old age by a thoroughly modern feeling—the restless desire of experience and knowledge. The hint for this amplification of Homer, Tennyson found, as is pointed out by Mr. Churton Collins, in Dante: “The germ, the spirit, and the sentiment of this poem are from the twenty-sixth canto of Dante’s *Inferno*. Tennyson has indeed done little but fill in the sketch of the great Florentine. As is usual with him in all cases where he borrows, the details and minuter portions of his work are his own; he has added grace, elaboration, and symmetry; he has called in the assistance of other poets. A rough crayon draught has been metamorphosed into a perfect picture. As the resemblances lie not so much in expression as in general tone, we will in this case substitute for the original a literal version. Ulysses is speaking:

Neither fondness for my son, nor reverence for my aged sire, nor the due love which ought to have gladdened Penelope, could conquer in me the ardour which I had to become experienced in the world, and in human vice and worth. I put out into the deep open sea with but one ship, and with that small company which had not deserted me. . . . I and my companions were old and tardy when we came to that narrow pass where Hercules assigned his landmarks. ‘O brothers,’ I said, ‘who through a hundred thousand dangers have reached the West, deny not to this brief vigil of your senses which remain, experience of the unpeopled world beyond the sun. Consider your origin; ye were not formed to live like brutes, but to follow virtue and knowledge.’ . . . Night already saw the other pole with all its stars, and ours so low that it rose not from the ocean floor (*Inferno*, xxvi., 94-126).”

Mr. Knowles reports Tennyson as saying when speaking of *In Memoriam*: “It [*In Memoriam*] is a very impersonal poem as well as personal. There is more about myself in ‘Ulysses,’ which was written under the sense of loss, and that all had gone by, but that still life must be fought to the end. It was more written with the feeling of his loss upon me than many poems in ‘In Memoriam.’” The “loss” referred to, is of course the death of his friend Hallam.

We have, then, in the *Ulysses*, a particularly happy example of the infusion of the poet's own mood and feeling into a character and situation which serve to bring them out and intensify them for the reader. Ulysses,—full of knowledge and experience, but with that inevitable sense of the diminution of power, of hopefulness, and of the possibilities of life, which comes with age,—still feels within his heart that insatiable craving for more light and more life which lies deep in every more finely touched spirit; and the words put into his mouth by the poet, become for the reader a typical expression of similar yearning for the infinite, and of the similar sense of limitation and loss however occasioned. For the expression of a kindred mood, compare *Merlin and the Gleam*.

The blank verse of the poem is at once characteristic and masterly. In short, as Mr. Stedman (*Victorian Poets*) says: "For visible grandeur and astonishingly compact expression, there is no blank verse poem, equally restricted as to length, that approaches the *Ulysses*."

2. among these barren crags of Ithaca, the domain of Ulysses, an island near the entrance of the gulf of Corinth.

3. mete and dole. The words are used to indicate the pettiness of the work; indeed, the wording of the first five lines indicates the speaker's discontent with the existing conditions of his life.

5. and know not me. 'My broad and varied experience have given me a spirit and ideas which are beyond the comprehension and sympathy of the inhabitants of this isle, limited as they are by the narrow round of their daily lives.'

6-7. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii., 3:

The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

8. suffer'd greatly. The poem is full of touches that recall Homer; one of the stock epithets of Ulysses is *πολύτλας* 'much enduring.'

10. the rainy Hyades. A group of stars in the head of the constellation 'Taurus' which, when they rose with the sun were supposed to bring rain; hence the name which is derived from the Gk. verb for 'to rain.' Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, i., 744: Arcturum, pluviasque Hyadas, geminosque Triones.

11. I am become a name. 'I have become famous.' For this use of *name*, cf. *Dream of Fair Women*, 163; it is a common Latin idiom, cf. *Aeneid*, ii., 89, etc.

17. ringing with the clash of weapons.

18. Cf. *Aeneid*, ii., 6 : quorum pars magna fui. Virgil uses the phrase in the sense of having taken a large share in events ; Tennyson means more than that : Ulysses has not only been influential in all matters in which he has been concerned, but these things have in their turn contributed to make him what he is.

19-21. Our experience at once reveals and limits our perception of the possibilities of life and knowledge ; these last are infinite, and, therefore, our advance only serves to widen our perception of their extent. So, experience may be compared to an arch, which at once enables us to see, and limits our vision of, the world beyond, whose horizon continually recedes as we approach.

22. Cf. Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, iii., 3, 150, where Ulysses says—

Perseverance, dear my lord,
Keeps honour bright ; to have done is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery.

25. one, i.e., one life.

29. three suns. 'Three years' ; so 'moons' for months. *Gardener's Daughter*, l. 15 : "for some three careless moons, The summer pilot of an empty heart."

33. Telemachus is represented in the *Odyssey* as a prudent young man ; Tennyson makes him an impersonation of humdrum respectability without the genius and inspiration which belong to the high spirit of Ulysses. There is just a touch of contempt in Ulysses' reference to him.

44-45. Note how suggestive and admirable is the background indicated by this touch of landscape, and by lines 54-56.

45, fol. Cf. Teucer's address to his companions in Horace, *Odes*, i., 7 :

O fortes pejora qui passi
Mecum saepe viri, nunc vino pelliti curas ;
Cras ingens iterabinus aequor.

In the Homeric story Ulysses had no such mariners ; they all perished on the return voyage from Troy.

53. According to Homer the Gods themselves took part in the conflicts before the walls of Troy, Mars and Venus fighting for the Trojans.

54. 'The lights of the houses.'

55. Note the happy effect of the long monosyllables, and the double caesura.

58-59. **sitting...furrows.** Suggested by the oft-recurring line of the *Odyssey*: ἐξῆς δ' ἐζόμενοι πολλὴν ἄλα τύπτων ἐρετμοῖς (And sitting in order they smote the hoary sea with their oars).

60-61. **the baths Of all the western stars.** The place where the stars seem to plunge into the Ocean. So in *Iliad*, xviii., 48, it is said of the Constellation of the Bear: οἷη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν Ωκεανοῖο ('it alone is free from the baths of Ocean').

62. In Homer, Ocean is represented as a mighty stream encompassing the earth; at the western side its waters plunge into a vast chasm where is the entrance to Hades (see *Odyssey*, x., 511, fol.).

63. **the Happy Isles.** The "Fortunatae Insulae" ('Islands of the Blessed') which were supposed to lie somewhere to the west of the Pillars of Hercules, and were sometimes identified with Elysium, the dwelling-place, after death, of favoured heroes.

64. **Achilles** the greatest of the Greek heroes before Troy.

66. **strength.** Abstract for concrete—'that strong band.'

70. Note how the coincidence of the metrical pauses between the feet, with the sense pauses, gives a movement to the line in keeping with the thought expressed.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

Published originally in *The Keepsake* for 1837, under the title of *St. Agnes*; included in the *Poems* of 1842; the title changed to *St. Agnes' Eve* in the edition of 1857.

January 21st is sacred to St. Agnes who, it is narrated, refused to marry the heathen son of the pretor, and after terrible persecution suffered martyrdom in the reign of the emperor Diocletian (284-305, A.D.). With St. Agnes' Eve various superstitions were connected, more especially that upon observing the proper rites, a maiden might see her future husband (cf. Keats' *Eve of St. Agnes*). It is possible that Tennyson felt that the character and circumstances delineated in the poem did not exactly suit St. Agnes, and, accordingly changed the title

of the poem, leaving the heroine a nameless embodiment of that ascetic enthusiasm which finds its masculine representative in Sir Galahad; she is "the pure and beautiful enthusiast who has died away from all her human emotions, and become the bride for whom a Heavenly Bridegroom is waiting.... Wordsworth at his best, as in 'Lucy,' might scarcely match the music of these stanzas; their pictorial perfection he could hardly attain unto; every image is in such delicate harmony with the pure young worshipper that it seems to have been transfigured by her purity, and in the last four lines the very sentences faint with the breathless culmination of her rapture" (Luce).

16. **argent round.** 'The full moon.'

19. **mine earthly house.** Cf. *II. Corinthians*, v., 1: "For we know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

21. **Break up.** 'Break open,' as in *I. Henry VI.*, 1, 3, and *Matthew*, xxiv., 43: "If the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he.... would not have suffered his house to be broken up."

25-36. She too has her marvellous vision, like other maidens on St. Agnes' Eve, but a vision of an import and character very different from theirs.

35. **the shining sea.** Cf. *Revelation*, xv., 2: "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast.... stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God."

SIR GALAHAD.

This, like *The Lady of Shalott*, is one of the earlier poems in which Tennyson works upon materials afforded by Arthurian romance. In Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, Sir Galahad is the knight who lived 'a clean maiden' and in consequence saw the Holy Grail. Tennyson seizes upon this personage to embody a type of the combination of ascetic and knightly virtue—of that devotion to an ideal which led the devotee to disregard earthly ties and bodily needs, and to live in a spiritual ecstasy. This poem represents the masculine side of the same spiritual condition which is unfolded in *St. Agnes' Eve*. Sir Galahad reappears in the *Idylls of the King*, being one of the prominent personages in *The Holy Grail*. First published in 1842.

5. **shattering.** The epithet is used to denote the broken and stunning sounds of a trumpet peal.

6. **brand.** Sword; the word is from the same root as 'burn,' and was, perhaps, employed in the present sense on account of the brightness of swords.

9. **lists.** Originally the barriers that enclosed the ground for a tournament, then the ground itself.

11-12. The lady spectators scattered flowers upon the successful combatants, from the galleries which overlooked the lists.

14. **on whom**=on those on whom. Similar omissions are common in Shakespeare, etc.; cf. *Measure for Measure*, ii., 2: "Most ignorant of what he is most assur'd."

18. **crypt.** 'Underground cell.'

21-22. He refers to the vision of the Holy Grail, which appeared only to the pure, and to the special favour of heaven which such vision indicates.

25. **crescent.** 'The crescent moon.'

31. **stalls.** 'The seats belonging to the clergy in the choir of a cathedral.'

42. **the Holy Grail.** The word 'grail' or 'graal,' means originally a bowl. According to the legend found in Malory and other versions of Arthurian story, the *Sangreal*, or holy grail was the vessel in which Jesus sacrificed the paschal lamb (or according to some versions, the cup which he used at the Last Supper). With this vessel Joseph of Arimathea caught the blood that flowed from the wound upon the Cross. Joseph brought it to Britain (see *Faery Queen*, ii., 10, 53). It could not be seen by any one who was not perfectly pure, and so was lost. The Grail had mystical and miraculous powers, and to find it became one of the quests of the Knights of the Round Table. Tennyson has treated the subject more fully in his '*Holy Grail*,' one of the *Idylls of the King*.

51. The emphasis is of course on the "ere."

Ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long.

—*Hamlet*, i. 1.

53. the leads. *Lead* was the common covering for roofs of substantial buildings in earlier times. It has been suggested that this noise of hail upon the roof is inconsistent with l. 52.

61. According to Malory's account of Sir Galahad's death, Joseph of Arimathea appears to him and says: "thou hast resembled me in two things, in that thou hast seen the marvels of the Sancgreal and in that thou hast been a clean maiden."

'AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT.'

This and the following six songs are from *The Princess*, published in 1847. These songs (with the exception of '*Tears, idle tears*') were not, however, inserted until the third edition of the poem appeared in 1850.

In *The Princess*, a party of ladies and gentlemen are gathered on a pleasant summer day in the ruins of an old abbey, and to pass the time, seven young men tell in succession an impromptu story about a Princess who founded a college for women. The story is thus divided into seven parts, and between the parts a song is inserted, supposed to be sung by the ladies—

the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind.

These six songs are given in the text, together with "*Tears, idle tears*," which is not one of the interludes, but belongs to the story itself.

6-9. The poem as originally printed consisted of two stanzas of five lines each. The ll. 6-9 were subsequently added and the lines printed without division into stanzas.

'SWEET AND LOW, SWEET AND LOW.'

ò. dying. 'Setting.'

14-15. These phrases are thrown in without grammatical construction, a practice extremely common in earlier forms of poetry. The connection in thought is sufficiently apparent.

Another version of this song may be found in the *Life*, Vol. I., p. 255.

‘THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS.’

According to the *Life* (Vol. I, p. 253) this song commemorates the echoes of Killarney.

1. **splendour.** The splendour of sunset.

3. **long light.** The rays of light seem long because the sun is low in the horizon.

shakes. ‘Quivers through the motion of the water.’

9. **scar.** ‘A bare or broken place on the side of a mountain’; the word is frequently used by Scott in the form *scaur*.

10. The mysterious and faint character of the echoes is well suited to suggest fairy agency.

‘TEARS, IDLE TEARS, I KNOW NOT WHAT THEY MEAN.’

In *The Princess* we hear how a party of ladies from the college spend a summer afternoon in a scientific ramble :—

Many a little hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
In the dark crag: and then we turn'd, we wound
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
Grew broader toward his death and fell, and all
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

then they gathered to their evening repast, and the Princess asked some one to sing—

and a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang.
‘Tears, idle tears,’ etc.

The form of this poem should be noted; non-rhyming verse has not often been employed for lyrical purposes in modern English. Milton uses it but with very partial success in the choruses of *Samson Agonistes*. The most successful example of such use before Tennyson is the well known *Ode to Evening*, by Collins (1721-1759), which may be found in the *Appendix* to this volume. Mr. James Knowles, in *The Nineteenth Century* for Jan. 1893, reports that Tennyson speaking

of this song said: "It is in a way like St. Paul's 'groanings which cannot be uttered.' It was written at Tintern when the woods were all yellowing with autumn seen through the ruined windows. It is what I have always felt even from a boy, and what as a boy I called the 'passion of the past.' And it is so always with me now; it is the distance that charms me in the landscape, the picture and the past, and not the immediate to-day in which I move" (Compare with this last sentence the poem *Far-far-away*). The "Tintern" referred to is Tintern Abbey, "perhaps the most beautiful ruin in England," on the right bank of the Wye in Monmouthshire, associated with Wordsworth's well-known *Lines written above Tintern Abbey*.

Prof. W. M. Dixon is "inclined to regard [this poem] as the most characteristic of his genius of any poem ever written by the author, and that for two reasons. It is his most successful expression of the emotion of vague regret, of dumb inarticulate pain of heart, a province of universal human feeling, which Tennyson alone among poets has found a voice to render, and thus made particularly his own."

The idea and feeling of this song are expressed in an early poem of Tennyson's published in *The Gem* for 1831, but not contained in his collected works:

O sad *no more* ! O sweet *no more* !
 O strange *no more* !
 By a mossed brookbank on a stone
 I smelt a wildwood flower alone ;
 There was a ringing in my ears,
 And both my eyes gushed out with tears,
 Surely all pleasant things had gone before,
 Low-buried fathom deep beneath with thee,
No more !

'THY VOICE IS HEARD THRO' ROLLING DRUMS.'

This song received its present form in the edition of 1851 ; the following is the earlier version :—

Lady, let the rolling drums
 Beat to battle where thy warrior stands ;
 Now thy face across his fancy comes
 And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpet blow,
 Clasp thy little babes about thy knee :
 Now their warrior father meets the foe,
 And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

‘HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD.’

In a volume of selections published in 1865, Tennyson included another version of this song. The poem may have been suggested by an incident in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, i., 9 :—

But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The Ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear !
Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,
Had lock'd the source of softer woe ;
And burning pride and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow ;
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee—
“And if I live to be a man,
My father's death revenged shall be !”
Then fast the mother's tears did seek
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

‘ASK ME NO MORE : THE MOON MAY DRAW THE SEA.’

This song is closely linked in thought to the subject of *Part VII.* of *The Princess*, to which it forms a prologue. In *Part VII.* we are told how the Princess, under the influence of kindly feelings, undertakes to nurse the wounded hero, her long repulsed suitor, how pity gave place in her heart to a tenderer interest, how her novel ideas and schemes for her sex give place, and ‘Love at last is lord of all,’ or to quote the words of the Prince—

Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd dream,
And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek—
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears
By some cold morning glacier ; frail at first
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gather'd colour day by day.

Mr. P. M. Wallace in his notes on this song, says :—“Note the predominance in this song of monosyllables. Of the 125 words which it contains only seven have more than one syllable, and these only two. This feature imparts a peculiar stateliness to the composition, emphasising the solemnity of its tone without impairing its melody.”

12. Cf. Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*, 772 :

And all in vain you strive against the stream.

THE BROOK.

First published in the volume entitled *Maud and Other Poems*, 1855. In the *Life* it is stated that “ ‘Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea’ was the poem more especially dedicated to the Somersby stream, and not, as some have supposed, ‘The Brook,’ which is designed to be a brook of the imagination.”

The Brook represents one *genus*—and that a distinctive one—in Tennyson’s poetry, the English Idyll. About the commonplace and realistic details of a somewhat slight theme he throws an idyllic charm—in this case partly through the halo which the past wears for the memory of the middle-aged speaker, partly through the beauty of the strikingly English background.

The unpretentious and simple narrative is relieved by touches of exquisite poetic beauty, and the perfect lyric which winds its course through the poem, blends itself with the framework in the most felicitous way and greatly enhances the general effect of the poem.

4. **scrip.** Documents entitling the holder to payments.

6. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, I, iii :

Antonio : Was this inserted to make interest good ?

Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams ?

Shylock : I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast.

The Greek word for interest, τόκος, means properly ‘begetting.’

16. **branding.** Scorching (the word is etymologically connected with *burn*). Cf. *In Memoriam*, II :

Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom.

17. **Neilgherry.** The Neilgherry Hills in the southern part of India in the Madras Presidency ; a favourite resort of Europeans because the elevation makes the air cool and salubrious.

19. **primrose fancies.** Youthful and flowery fancies ; the primrose is an early flower as the etymology indicates : *primrose* represents Middle English *primerole* (the change to *rose* being due to popular etymology), Lat. *primerula* or *primula*, a diminutive from *primus*. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, iii :

Whiles, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,

and Drayton, *Polyolbion*, XV, 149 :

The primrose placing first, because that in the spring
It is the first appears, then only flourishing.

23. **coot and hern.** *Hern* is a variant for *heron*. The *coot* is an aquatic bird that is chiefly found on still waters—small lakes, etc.

26. **bicker.** One of those picturesque words, the skilful use of which is characteristic of Tennyson. It indicates quick, repeated action, and is frequently applied to streams; so Thomson, *Castle of Indolence*, I, iii: "they [streamlets] bickered through the sunny glade"; and Scott, *Monastery*, IX: "At the crook of the glen, where bickers the burnie"; also to light, *The Princess*, V, 253: "as the fiery Sirius alters hue, And bickers into red and emerald."

29. **thorps.** 'Hamlets'; an example of Tennyson's predilection for reviving old Saxon words; used by Chaucer (*e.g.*, *Parlement of Foules*, l. 350), and in scattered examples later; it is said that seventy-six names of places in Lincolnshire, Tennyson's native county, end with this termination; *e.g.*, Mablethorpe, Claythorpe, Theddlethorpe, etc.

43. **fret.** 'Eat away.'

45. **fairy.** For similar use of the word, see quotation from Wordsworth in note on l. 61 below.

46. **willow-weed and mallow.** The 'willow-weed' (*Epilobium Hirsutum*) is a common plant in England on the margins of streams amongst reeds and coarse grasses, as is also the common mallow (*Malva Sylvestris*).

54. **grigs.** 'Crickets.'

58. **grayling.** A fish of the salmon family which "prefers rivers with rocky or gravelly bottom and an alternation of stream and pool."

61. **waterbreak.** 'Ripple'; cf. Wordsworth, *Nutting*, 33: "Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on."

70. **lissome.** A variant of 'lithesome.'

82. The reference is to the well-known Scotch song by Burns, "Ye banks and braes o' Bonnie Doon."

94. **mealy-mouthed.** In its original metaphorical sense 'speaking indistinctly'; hence, 'soft spoken' with an insinuation of untruth or hypocrisy.

98. **prest the cause.** 'Pressed for a statement of the cause.'

103. **wizard pentagram.** A figure consisting of two equilateral triangles placed upon one another so as to form a six-pointed star. It was supposed in the Middle Ages to have magical powers against evil spirits.

118. **meadow-sweet** (*Spiraea Ulmaria*), a sweet-scented, low shrub. "A flower which greets all ramblers to moist fields and tranquil water-

courses in midsummer is the meadow-sweet, called also queen of the meadows. It belongs to the *Spiraea* tribe, where our hardhack, nine-bark, meadow-sweet, queen of the prairie and others, belong, but surpasses all our species in being sweet-scented—a suggestion of almonds and cinnamon. I saw much of it about Stratford, and in rowing on the Avon plucked its large clusters of fine, creamy white flowers from my boat." (*Burroughs' A Glance at British Wild-flowers.*)

128. **Approved.** 'Confirmed what he said'; so *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, i, 60: "I am full sorry that he approves the common liar."

132. **chase.** Properly "an unenclosed hunting ground which is private property."

141. **bailiff.** 'The steward or manager of an estate.'

156. 'Ratified the bargain by shaking hands.'

171. **covers.** 'Underbrush which covers the game.'

177-8. The **network** of light and shadow made by the ripples on the surface may be observed in any shallow stream.

180. **shingly.** Adjective from 'shingle' in sense of 'gravel'; cf. *Lancelot and Elaine*, 53: "And down the shingly scaur he plunged"; and *Enoch Arden*, 768: "Lest the hard shingle should grate underfoot."

189. **Arno.** The river upon which Florence is built; see l. 35 above.

190. **Brunelleschi** (pronounced broonelléskee) was a famous Italian architect (1377-1446), the designer of the dome of the Cathedral of Florence.

196. **In converse seasons.** The poet subsequently changed this to "in April-autumns."

203. **bindweed bells.** Flowers of the bindweed, a species of *Convolvulus* ('morning glory').

briony. The common briony (*Bryonia Dioica*) is a plant with tendrils, like the cucumber, which is common in hedge-rows.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

First published on the morning of the day of the Duke's funeral, Nov. 18th, 1852; it was revised in 1853 and again when it appeared with *Maud* in 1855. The Ode, as indicated above, was written before the funeral actually took place, but the poet was a spectator of the procession and pronounced it "very fine." He writes, "At the funeral I was struck with the look of sober manhood in the British soldier." It

exemplifies the qualities of the ode proper, which is described by Mr. Gosse as "any strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyrical verse directed to a fixed purpose and dealing progressively with one dignified theme." The varied and irregular metre corresponds with the progressive and changing character of the thought and feeling embodied. The ode before us is not only admirable as poetry, but seizes with truth upon the real excellences of its hero's character and the essence of his relations to the nation.

1. The first edition reads : "Let us bury."

5, 6. The first edition reads :

When laurel-garlanded leaders fall,
And warriors carry, etc.

9. The first edition does not contain this line : the second edition reads :

He died on Walmer's lonely shore
But here, in streaming, etc.

The Duke is buried in St. Paul's Cathedral in the very centre of traffic.

18-9. Compare with what Carlyle said on the occasion of the Duke's funeral. "It is, indeed, a sad and solemn fact for England that such a man has been called away, the *last* perfectly honest and perfectly brave public man they had." (*Life in London*, vol. ii, chap. xxi.) In 1850 Carlyle had seen him at a grand ball and writes : "By far the most interesting figure present was the old Duke of Wellington, who appeared between twelve and one, and slowly glided through the rooms - truly a beautiful old man ; I had never seen till now how beautiful, and what an expression of graceful simplicity, veracity, and nobleness, there is about the old hero when you see him close at hand." (*Ibid.*, chap. xxiii.)

20. The first edition reads : "Our sorrow draws but on the Golden Past," and does not contain the next two lines.

23. Cf. McCarthy's *History of Our Own Times*, chap. xxiii : "The trust which the nation had in him was absolutely unlimited. It never entered into the mind of any one to suppose that the Duke of Wellington was actuated in any step he took, or advice he gave, by any feeling but a desire for the good of the state." His influence as a "state-oracle," and his good sense (see l. 33 below) were exhibited in the passage of the Catholic Emancipation Bill (1829), and in the passing of the Reform Bill by the abstention from voting on the part of a large number of the Peers.

28. The first edition reads "freest from."

39. **four-square.** The Greeks conceived the square as something perfect; hence, the epithet *τετραγωνος* was applied by them metaphorically to indicate perfect character. This idea may have been in Tennyson's mind, although here the epithet is applied more literally to a tower, and suggests a preparedness for attack from any quarter.

42. **World-victor's victor.** The conqueror of Napoleon.

49. **The cross of gold** upon the dome of St. Paul's.

55. Carlyle, in his diary, refers to this car in very uncomplimentary terms:—

"November 19, 1852.—Yesterday saw the Duke of Wellington's funeral procession from Bath House second floor windows; a *painful*, miserable kind of thing to me and others of a serious turn of mind. The one true man of official men in England, or that I know of in Europe, concludes his long course. The military music sounded, and the tramp of feet and the roll of guns and coaches, to him inaudible forever more. The regiment he *first* served in was there, various regiments or battalions, one soldier from every regiment of the British line; above four thousand soldiers in all. Nothing else in the sumptuous procession was of the least dignity. The car, or hearse, a monstrous bronze mass, which broke through the pavement in various places, its weight being seven or ten tons, was of all the objects I ever saw the abominably ugliest, or nearly so. . . . All people stood in deep silence and reverently took off their hats. . . . Tennyson's verses are naught. Silence alone is respectable on such an occasion."

59. This line is not in the first edition.

68. As, for example, in the Peninsular war.

74. **well-attemper'd frame.** Cf. *Julius Caesar*, V, v:

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man.'

75. **civic muse.** The muse that presides over what relates to the state and public life.

79. **ever-ringing.** Altered in 1873 to "ever-echoing."

83. **mighty seaman.** Nelson, who was buried under the dome of St. Paul's; the poet represents him as putting the question contained in the three preceding lines.

91-113. In the first edition :

His martial wisdom kept us free ;
 O warrior-seaman, this is he.
 This is England's greatest son,
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee ;
 He that gained a hundred fights,
 And never lost an English gun ;
 He that in his earlier day
 Against the myriads of Assaye
 Clashed with his fiery few and won :
 And underneath another sun
 Made the soldier, led him on,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines
 All their marshal's bandit swarms
 Back to France with countless blows
 Till their host of eagles flew
 Past the Pyrenean pines.

99. **Assaye.** A village of Hyderabad in Hindostan where, in 1803, the Duke (then Arthur Wellesley) with 5,000 men defeated two Mahratta chieftains with 30,000 men.

104. **The treble works.** These were the famous triple lines of Torres Vedras by means of which in 1810 he baffled the French marshal, Masséna.

110. The French were driven back over the Pyrenees in the autumn of 1813.

118. This line is followed in the first edition by a line subsequently omitted : "He withdrew to brief repose."

119. **Eagle.** A metal eagle on a pole was the standard of a Roman legion, and this ensign was adopted for the regiments of Napoleon. The reference of the line is to the renewal of war by the escape of Napoleon from Elba, April, 1815.

123. The battle of Waterloo was fought upon Sunday, June 18th, 1815.

127. The appearance of the Prussian army under Blücher at 7 o'clock in the evening was the signal for the charge of the British Guards, which decided the battle.

130. "As they joyously sprang forward against the discomfited masses of the French, the setting sun broke through the clouds . . . and glittered on the bayonets of the Allies, while they in turn poured

down into the valley." (*Creasy's Decisive Battles*, quoted by Messrs. Rowe and Webb.)

136. **silver-coasted.** The reference is presumably to the chalk cliffs which form the southern coast of England. Shakespeare's use of *silver* in *Richard II*, II, i, seems more appropriate :

This precious stone set in the silver sea.

137. The battle of the Baltic was fought off Copenhagen against the Danes in 1801 ; the battle of the Nile, against the French in 1798.

151, fol. The sentiments of Section vii are very characteristic of the writer ; cf. ll. 49 fol. of the *Conclusion* of *The Princess*, "Love thou thy land," etc.

152-3. The reference is to the revolutions on the Continent. During 1848 and the following years revolutionary movements took place in France, Austria, Italy, Spain, etc., which, in the main, seemed productive rather of evil than good.

154-5. These lines are not in the first edition.

155. **Saxon.** In the latest editions the poet changed this to the more inclusive term "Briton."

157. **Of boundless love and reverence.** In first edition : "Of most unbounded reverence."

159. This line is not in the first edition.

brute control. 'The unreasoning and unrighteous power of mere force, whether of the many or the few.'

160. **the eye.** The Greeks used the word for eye (*οφθαλμός*) for what is very dear and precious, whence came Milton's phrase, "Athens, the eye of Greece" (*Paradise Regained*, IV, 240).

164. Cf. 'You ask me why,' l. 6.

166. **ye help to save.** In first edition "ye save."

168-9. In first edition :

And help the march of human mind :
Till crowds be sane and crowns be just.

170. **wink.** 'Shut the eyes,' as often in Shakespeare ; e.g., *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I, ii, 139 : "I see things, too, although you judge I wink" ; *Sonnet* xliii, i, etc. ; so in *Acts*, xvii, 30 : "And the times of this ignorance God winked at."

In the first edition after line 170 is found the following passage subsequently omitted :

Perchance our greatness will increase ;
 Perchance a darkening future yields
 Some reverse from worse to worse,
 The blood of men in quiet fields,
 And sprinkled on the sheaves of peace.

171-3. This passage originally read :

And O remember him who led your hosts ;
 Respect his sacred warning ; guard your coasts.
 His voice is silent, etc.

170, fol. In 1848 Wellington drew attention to the defenceless state of the south coast of England, advocated the complete fortification of the Channel Isles, Plymouth, the increase of the regular forces, and the raising of 150,000 militia. In 1852-'3 there was much agitation in England over the question of defence, owing to a dread of French invasion by Napoleon III. Tennyson strongly sympathized with the movement for additional defence as is shown in the songs he wrote at the time ; e.g., "Britons, guard your own," contributed to *The Examiner*, and printed in the *Life*.

181-5. Not in the first edition.

186. He was born in the spring of 1769.

188. The editor has not been able to discover any place where such an epithet is applied to Alfred.

196. **stars.** Marks of distinction ; peerage, order of the Garter, etc.

197. The Goddess of Fortune is represented in ancient art as bearing a cornucopia (i.e., 'horn of plenty') from which she pours her gifts.

201. **not once or twice.** Cf. *II Kings*, vi, 10 : "And the King of Israel . . . saved himself there not once or twice."

202. **was.** "Turned out in the end to be, though it was not expected to be (a Greek and Latin idiom : the imperfect of sudden recognition)." (*Rowe and Webb*.)

206-8. Milton uses similar imagery with a similar meaning in speaking of the plant which is an antidote to the spells of Comus :

The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flower.

217. Cf. *Revelation*, xxi, 23 : "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it."

218-227. In the first edition, these lines read :

He has not failed ; he hath prevailed :
 So let the men whose hearths he saved from shame
 Thro' many and many an age proclaim
 At civic revel, etc.

236. **For.** Here means "on account of." "His kindness to children is well known," says his biographer in the *English Men of Action Series*, and quotes some instances ; see *ibid.*, p. 253.

241. Not in the first edition.

251-62. The first edition reads :

For solemn, too, this day are we,
 O friends, we doubt not that for one so true
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And Victor must he ever be,
 Though worlds on worlds in myriad myriads rolled.

255. Rowe and Webb compare what M. Arnold says of his father in *Rugby Chapel* :

That force
 Surely has not been left vain !
 Somewhere, surely, afar,
 In the sounding labour-house vast
 Of being, is practised that strength.

259-61. Cf. *In Memoriam*, cxxiii :

There rolls the deep where grew the tree.
 O earth, what changes hast thou seen !

 The hills are shadows, and they flow
 From form to form, and nothing stands ;
 They melt like mist, the solid lands,
 Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

266-70. These lines are not in the first edition.

271. He is gone. In the first edition : "The man is gone."

278. In the first edition : "But speaks," etc.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

On December 2nd, 1854, Tennyson, according to the *Life*, Vol. I, p. 381, "wrote 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' in a few minutes after reading the description in the *Times* in which occurred the phrase 'some one had blundered,' and this was the origin of the metre of the

poem." It appeared in *The Examiner* for December 9th with the following note: "Written after reading the first report of 'The Times' correspondent, where only 607 sabres are mentioned as having taken part in the charge." In the following year it was printed on a fly-leaf with the following note:

"August 8th, 1855.

"Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad on the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, I have ordered a thousand copies to be printed for them. No writing of mine can add to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea; but if what I have heard be true they will not be displeased to receive these copies from me, and to know that those who sit at home love and honour them." It was included in the volume entitled *Maud and Other Poems*, published in 1855.

The *Times* of the 14th November contains the special correspondent's letter referred to by Tennyson's son in the quotation above, and stating that 607 had taken part of whom only 198 returned; but on the preceding day there is an editorial account of the battle based upon the official despatches, which would be the first detailed account that Tennyson would read; and a comparison of the two accounts plainly shows that it was, not unnaturally, the earlier one which most impressed the poet's imagination, and gave suggestions for the details and even the phraseology of the poem. The following extracts give the striking parallelisms:—

"We now know the details of the attack upon Balaklava on the 25th, and with them much that is glorious and much that is reassuring. . . . The disaster, then, of which the mere shadow has darkened so many a household among us for the last ten days is not more, but it is not much less, than the annihilation of the Light Cavalry Brigade. It entered into action about 700 strong and mustered only 191 on its return, though, of course, some afterwards rejoined their comrades. . . . Had there been the smallest use in the movement that has cost us so much,—had it been the necessity of a retreat or part of any plan whatever, we should endeavour to bear this sad loss as we do the heaps of human life lavished in an assault. Even accident could have made it more tolerable. But it was a mere mistake,—evidently a mistake and perceived to be such when it was too late to correct it. The affair then assumed the terrible form of a splendid self-sacrifice. Two great armies, composed of four nations, saw, from the slopes of a vast amphitheatre, seven hundred British cavalry proceed at a rapid pace, and in perfect order, to certain destruction. Such a spectacle was never seen before, and we trust will never be repeated. . . . How far the order itself was the result of a misconception, or was intended to be executed at discretion, does not appear, and will probably afford the subject of painful but vain recrimination. It was interpreted as leaving no discretion at all, and the whole

brigade advanced at a trot for more than a mile, down a valley, with a murderous flank fire of Minié muskets and shell from the hills on both sides. It charged batteries, took guns, sabred the gunners, and charged the Russian cavalry beyond; but, not being supported,—and perhaps under the circumstances it was fortunate that it was not,—and being attacked by cavalry in front and rear, it had to cut its way through them, and return through the same cavalry and the same fire. The brigade was simply pounded by the shot, shell, and Minié bullets from the hills. . . . Causeless as the sacrifice was, it was most glorious. A French general who saw the advance, and apprehended at once its fatal issue, exclaimed, ‘C’est très magnifique, mais ce n’est pas la guerre.’ . . . It is difficult not to regard such a disaster in a light of its own, and to separate it from the general sequence of affairs. Causeless and fruitless, it stands by itself, as a grand heroic deed, surpassing even the spectacle of shipwrecked regiment settling down into the waves, each man still in his rank. The British soldier will do his duty, even to certain death, and is not paralyzed by feeling that he is the victim of some hideous blunder. . . . Splendid as the event was on the Alma, yet that rugged ascent in the face of heights blazing with destruction was scarcely so glorious as the progress of the cavalry through and through the valley of death, with a murderous fire, not only in front, but on both sides, above, and even in the rear.”

‘BREAK, BREAK, BREAK.’

This poem, first published in 1842, was, we are told in the *Life*, “made in a Lincolnshire lane at 5 o’clock in the morning between blossoming hedges.” In theme, it is no doubt like that of *In Memoriam*, associated with the death of Hallam.

ENOCH ARDEN.

Enoch Arden was published along with several other poems (*Aylmer’s Field*, *The Grandmother*, *Sea Dreams*, *The Northern Farmer*, *Tithonus*, *The Sailor Boy*, *The Flower*, *Welcome to Alexandra*, and some shorter pieces) in the year 1864. Sixty thousand copies were sold in a very short time, and in the *Life* we are told that the volume “is, perhaps with the exception of *In Memoriam*, the most popular of his works. *Enoch Arden*, or *The Fisherman*, as he named it originally, was written in the summer of 1862. . . . It took him only about a fortnight to write *Enoch Arden*, within a little summerhouse in the meadow called Maiden’s Croft, looking over Freshwater Bay and towards the downs. In this meadow he paced up and down, making his lines, and then wrote them in a M.S. book on the table of the summerhouse, which he himself had designed and painted” (*Life*, Vol. II, p. 7). “*Enoch Arden*,” the Poet wrote, “is founded on a theme given me by the

sculptor Woolner. I believe this particular story came out of Suffolk, but something like the same story is told in Brittany and elsewhere."

This poem is one of the most interesting examples of Tennyson's "English Idyls," as he called them, the idyllic treatment of ordinary themes; other examples are *Dora*, *The Gardner's Daughter*, *The Brook*. They may be compared with his Classical Idyls, where similar treatment is given to subjects drawn from ancient story: *Ænone*, *Lucretius*, *Ulysses*, *Tithonus*. Notwithstanding the popularity of some of these domestic idyls, as for example *Enoch Arden* itself, the best critical opinion holds that Tennyson's genius found a more congenial sphere, and produced work of much higher quality in his classical poems. Yet, as their popularity shows, those poems which come nearer to the experience of the reader may be better adapted for the development of immature taste. The idyllic quality in *Enoch Arden* becomes clearer when brought into contrast with the bare simplicity and truth of such a poem as Wordsworth's *Michael*, or with the genuine naturalness of a poem of Tennyson's published in the same volume as *Enoch Arden*, *The Northern Farmer*, which in insight and virile force far surpasses the more elaborate and ambitious poem. The excellence of *Enoch Arden*, apart from the beauty of individual passages, lies in the success with which the poet depicts the sublime self-sacrifice of the hero; this stands out in striking contrast with the mere prettiness and sentimental triviality of the earlier part.

1-9. Note that all the local details of importance in the story are included in this concise and effective description.

breaking. "Note how the trochee here causes a break in the rhythm, the sound echoing the sense (*Webb*). Two stressed syllables (here 'cliff' and 'break') do not naturally follow one another in English, and hence enforce a pause between them.

7. Danish barrows. "Barrows" are sepulchral mounds. Cf. *Tithonus*,

And grassy barrows of the happier dead.

They are not infrequent in England; they were often erected by many of the earlier races, among others by the Scandinavian people. Here Tennyson ascribes them to the Danish invaders.

16. lumber. Not in the narrow sense in which it is usually employed in this country, but cumbersome objects cast aside as useless.

18. fluke. The part of an anchor which catches on the ground.

36. This is the first case of unconscious prophecy and of omen, by which the poet has chosen to give a certain heightening to his story.

58. Cf. with l. 47. Repetition of this kind is characteristic of Homer, and is often employed by Tennyson; see, in this poem, ll. 46 and 86, 167 and 294, 67-8 and 370-1, etc.

67. **prone.** Originally 'bending forward,' usually 'lying on one's face' (cf. l. 775), but here 'sloping precipitously.'

68. **feather.** The wood gradually disappears with an irregular outline through a transition of smaller trees and shrubs. A similar metaphorical use of the word is to be found in *The Gardener's Daughter*, l. 46:

And all about the large lime feathers low.

80-1. The trisyllabic feet in these two lines give a movement to the verse in harmony with the idea expressed.

94. **ocean-smelling osier.** An example of the way in which Tennyson clothes a homely idea in poetically suggestive language. The 'osier' is properly a kind of willow; here of course a willow-basket.

96. **market-cross.** Crosses were frequently erected in public places, in the centre of villages, market places, etc. They often consisted of some sort of platform for preaching, surmounted by the cross proper. The fact is often commemorated in names of places, as 'Charing Cross.'

98. **the portal-warding lion-whelp.** Cf. *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*:

The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold than I.

and *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*:

Here is Locksley Hall, my grandson, here the lion-guarded gate.

99. **peacock-yewtree.** An example of the old fashion of clipping evergreen shrubs into artificial forms.

118. Cf. note on l. 36.

130-1. The shadow of the cloud comes between the ship and a part of the sea on which the sun is shining.

offing. That part of the sea which is nearer to the horizon than to the shore.

181. Note the appropriateness of the metrical movement to the idea expressed.

187. When the yearning after the Divine seeks a response in that aspect of God which is felt to sympathize with man.

212-3. Cf. note on l. 36.

221, fol. Note the reminiscences of Biblical phraseology ; see 1 *Peter* v, 7 ; *Psalms* cxxxix, 7-10 ; xcv, 5.

250. Note the stress 'compensating.'

269. Again note the movement of the verse.

283. Cf. *Isaiah* xxxviii, 1-2 : "And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order : for thou shalt die, and not live. Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord."

295. Cf. l. 167.

329. **garth.** Yard ; the words garden, yard, and garth are all of cognate origin.

379. **whitening.** See note on *The Lady of Shalott*, l. 10.

495. The method of solving a difficulty by opening a Bible and putting the finger at random on some text which, as was supposed, would indicate the true solution, was at one time a common practise. In this case, as so often in similar cases of supernatural aid narrated in legend (cf. example to story of *Œdipus*), the information is ambiguous and only serves to lead the inquirer astray.

497. The text seems to have been *Judges* iv, 5.

503. For the Biblical allusions, see *Malachi* iv, 2 ; *Mark* xi, 8-10.

511-12. Repetition from lines 80-1.

509, fol. Another suggestion of supernatural influence.

529. **The Biscay**, *i.e.*, the Bay of Biscay.

531. **the summer of the world.** The tropics.

532. **The Cape** of Good Hope.

535. The reference is to the steady currents of air known as the Trade Winds.

539-40. These lines suggest *China* as the place where the haven (l. 537) was.

544. **feathering.** Breaking into feather-shaped ripples ; cf. l. 68 and note.

572. The following passage is one of the most famous of Tennyson's descriptions. It presents something which he had never seen, though

long before the thought of tropical scenery had stirred his imagination ; see *Locksley Hall*.

—to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.
Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.
Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag.
Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

Cf. also *In Memoriam* xxxvi. :

Those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

lawns. Used here in its more original sense, 'open grassy spaces among trees' (cf. *Ænone*, l. 6) ; *glades* are narrower spaces.

576. "Note the musical alliterativeness of this line, and the sense of *trailing* growth produced by its rhythm." (Webb).

579. **the broad belt of the world.** The tropics.

584. Note the appropriate metrical and sound effect of the line.

586. Note the hurrying effect of the trisyllabic feet.

594-6. The sense of monotony is given by the repetition.

597. **globed.** They did not seem mere points of light, their brilliancy lent them size ; so in the passage quoted above in note on l. 568, we have "*Larger* constellations burning."

605. **the line.** The Equator.

613, fol. A suggestion of some mysterious influence carrying to his ears the sound of the bells at his wife's second wedding.

639-44. So of Alexander Selkirk it is told that, after his five solitary years in Juan Fernandez, "he had so much forgot his language for want of use that we could scarce understand him ; for he seemed to speak his words by halves."

644. **long-bounden.** An example of the poet's liking for antiquated and poetical forms ; cf. l. 865.

653. **county.** This is the reading of the earliest edition, — perhaps a misprint ; the latest edition has "country."

661. **her ghostly wall.** Through the misty air, the chalk cliffs of England were only vaguely discernible.

675. **holt.** A small wood.

tilth. Cultivated land ; cf. *The Princess*, i, 109 : "We crost a livelier land ; and so by tilth and grange . . . we gained the mother city."

678. Note the retarded metrical movement caused by the troches and the long monosyllables.

680. The mist makes his return the more unnoted, and increases the sense of his isolation. There is probably also symbolism of the clouding of Enoch's fortune.

690. **the pool** seems here to mean the harbour,—a use of the word for which the editor is unable to find a parallel.

692. **timber-crost.** The wooden framework stands out from the plaster as was usual in old houses ; see for example the pictures of the Shakespeare house at Stratford.

737. **shingle.** Gravel ; cf. *Holy Grail*, l. 808 : "I heard the shingle grinding in the surge."

797. **burthen.** The refrain, *i.e.*, the words repeated at the end of each stanza ; more properly it means a bass accompaniment, often consisting of the same words repeated, sung throughout a song. The word is of different origin from *burden*, a load.

803. Cf. *Early Sonnets*, x, 7-8 :

As I have heard that somewhere in the main
Fresh water springs come up through bitter brine.

807. **enow.** Provincial or antiquated for *enough*.

829. The squall as it lifts carries off the misty rain cloud.

869. **promise-bounden.** See note on l. 644.

910. "The calling of the sea is a term used, believe, chiefly in the western parts of England, to signify a ground-swell. When this occurs on a windless night, the echo of it rings through the timbers of the old houses in a haven." (Tennyson, as quoted in the *Life*, vol. II, p. 8.)

917. The closing line can scarcely be regarded as on a level with the latter part of the poem.

ODE TO MEMORY.

This and the following poem are examples of Tennyson's early style. Both appeared in *Poems Chiefly Lyrical*, which was published in 1830. To the title of the *Ode to Memory* were added in the first edition the words "written very early in life." Tennyson himself considered this poem "one of the best among his very early and peculiarly concentrated nature-poems." (*Life*, I, p. 3). It exhibits some of the weakness as well as the power and promise of his immature style. The best portions

are the descriptions in the 4th and 5th stanzas. The opening stanzas are vague and obscure, and some of the lines seem to exemplify Coleridge's criticism on reading the volume of 1830, that the poet had begun "to write verses without very well understanding what metre is."

7. It is his earliest memories that the Poet is recalling.

11. **orient** means originally "rising," then "eastern," and then "brilliant." Here, probably, both the first and third meanings are intended to be suggested. Earliest memory is here, as in line 7, indicated by metaphors from the dawn.

12. **Whilome**. The choice of word has something of affected poetic vocabulary to which Tennyson tends.

16-20. The rein is given to an exuberance of poetic description which, instead of making clearer, withdraws the attention from the line of thought.

24-27. A metaphorical expression for the earliest memories, which are likely to be among the most permanent and pleasing of our recollections.

32. **cope**. Originally means a cover; hence transferred to the vault of the sky, in which sense it is often found especially in poetry; cf. Chapman's *Iliad*, v, 773: "Betwixt the cope of stars and earth."

35. **the million stars**. The brilliant anticipations of the future by the youthful mind.

38. **she**. "The deep mind of dauntless infancy."

39. **Those spirit-thrilling eyes**. The "stars" of line 35.

41-2. These two beautiful lines, which are worthy of Tennyson at his best, he borrows from his own prize poem *Timbuctoo*.

51, fol. His earliest memories are not of some splendid or striking scene, but of the common features of the ordinary English landscape. The descriptions which follow are all closely based upon the scenes and objects familiar to his childhood.

56-7. Mr. A. J. Church in his *Laureate's Country* reports that these elms are still standing, but the poplars (a short-lived species) have disappeared.

58-63. This is a description of Somersby Brook, "the charm and beauty of which haunted him through life." (*Life*, I, 3).

66. **wattled**. A wattle is a hurdle made of interlaced wands.

67. **wolds.** See note on *Lady of Shalott*, l. 3 (p. 128).

70. **amber morn.** Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro*, ll. 60-1 :

Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light.

74. **is wed.** Perhaps 'wed' to the body. We have here the same idea as before—the charm and beauty that surrounds early memories. So again, in another metaphor in ll. 78-9 below. Cf. Wordsworth's *Immortality Ode*.

86. **storied walls.** The pictures on the walls tell the stories ; cf. Gray's *Elegy* :

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?

93. Just as an artist keeps stepping back to get a view of his picture.

96. **Pike.** A name commonly applied in the north of England to a pointed mountain or hill ; so often in the names of mountains in the Lake District, Scafell Pike, Longdale Pikes, etc. Wordsworth uses the word as a common noun in his *Descriptive Sketches*.

100. **lowly cottage.** We are told in the *Life* that this is the cottage at Mablethorp, a seaside hamlet not far from Somersby, where the Tennyson family was wont to spend a holiday. "The cottage to which the family resorted was close under the sea bank, 'the long low line of tussocked dunes' I used to stand on this sand-built ridge," my father said, "and think that it was the spine-bone of the world." From the top of this, the immense sweep of marsh inland and the whole weird strangeness of the place greatly moved him. (*Life*, I, p. 20).

102. **the frequent bridge.** This use of *frequent* in the sense of occurring at short distances apart is somewhat archaic, but cf. Hawthorne's *Transformation* : "It is a wise and lovely sentiment that set up the frequent shrine and cross along the roadside."

104. **The trenched waters.** The long straight dikes by which the flats in Lincolnshire are drained

105, fol. A description of the parsonage garden at Somersby.

119. **My friend, with you.** This is the person, seemingly, referred to in the line which follows the title. As the *Ode* is, of course, also addressed to Memory, this is rather confusing ; to emphasize the difference was presumably the reason for the change from "thee" in the earlier texts, to the "you" which is the present reading.

THE DYING SWAN.

First published in the volume of 1830; one of the best poems in this volume. The idea that swans sang at the approach of death, and then only, is very ancient; see for example Plato's *Phaedo*, 85 B. There are constant references to this supposed peculiarity in English literature: *Othello* v, 2, "I will play the swan and die in music"; *Merchant of Venice* iii, 2: "Then if he lose, he makes a swan-like end, Fading in music," *King John* v, 7, etc. As a fact the swan usually makes a hissing noise like a goose, but has also a trumpet-like call.

1-4. This description is based on Lincolnshire scenery.

5. **inner.** This presumably refers to the *low* sound which the river makes.

8-10. These lines exhibit the characteristics of the Tennysonian style.

10. **took the reed tops.** Just caught and bent the tops of the reeds.

11-12. This seems scarcely consistent with the state of the atmosphere indicated in l. 4 above.

17. The seemingly capricious wheelings of the swallow are really caused probably by its pursuit of flying insects.

18. **Marish.** Antiquated and poetical form for 'marsh,' see l. 40 below; cf. Chaucer, *Wife of Bath's Tale*: "Down to a mareys faste by she ran."

21, fol. Note the changing metrical effect in this stanza to suit the ideas represented, the same sort of thing which is more fully and successfully exhibited in the choral song of the *Lotos-Eaters*.

26. **Coronach.** A Gaelic word meaning a funeral song or lamentation. The song in Canto III, xvi, of the *Lady of the Lake*, is entitled a *Coronach*.

32. **Shawms.** The shawm is an ancient wind instrument; cf. the Prayer Book version of *Psalms* xeviii: "With trumpets also and with shawms, O show yourselves joyful before the Lord."

33. **the tumult of acclaim.** Cf. *In Memoriam* lxxv, last line.

39. **wave-worn horns.** The horn-shaped indentations worn in the banks by the water.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

SELECTIONS FOR "SIGHT" READING.

1.—SONG FOR SAINT CECILIA'S DAY.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony This universal frame began, When Nature underneath a heap Of jarring atoms lay, And could not heave her head,	5
The tuneful voice was heard from high : " Arise ye more than dead !" Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry In order to their stations leap, And Music's power obey.	10
From harmony, from heavenly harmony This universal frame began : From harmony to harmony Through all the compass of the notes it ran, The diapason closing full in Man.	15
What passion cannot Music raise and quell ? When Jubal struck the chorded shell, His listening brethren stood around, And, wondering, on their faces fell To worship that celestial sound.	20
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell Within the hollow of that shell That spoke so sweetly and so well. What passion cannot Music raise and quell ?	
The trumpet's loud clangour Excites us to arms, With shrill notes of anger And mortal alarms.	25

APPENDIX.

The double double double beat Of the thundering drum Cries, "Hark ! the foes come ; Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat !"	30
The soft complaining flute In dying notes discovers The woes of hopeless lovers, Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.	35
Sharp violins proclaim Their jealous pangs and desperation, Fury, frantic indignation, Depth of pains, and height of passion For the fair disdainful dame.	40
But O, what art can teach, What human voice can reach The sacred organ's praise ? Notes inspiring holy love, Notes that wing their heavenly ways To mend the choirs above.	45
Orpheus could lead the savage race, And trees uprooted left their place Sequacious of the lyre ; But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher ; When to her organ vocal breath was given, An angel heard, and straight appeared— Mistaking Earth for Heaven !	50
As from the power of sacred lays The spheres began to move, And sung the great Creator's praise To all the blest above ; So, when the last and dreadful hour This crumbling pageant shall devour, The Trumpet shall be heard on high, The dead shall live, the living die, And Music shall untune the sky.	55 60

—Dryden.

2.—ODE TO EVENING.

2.—ODE TO EVENING.

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear
 (Like thy own solemn springs,
 Thy springs and dying gales);

O Nymph reserved,—while now the bright-haired Sun 5
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts
 With brede ethereal wove,
 O'erhang his wavy bed,

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing, 10
 Or where the beetle winds
 His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum,—
 Now teach me, Maid composed, 15
 To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
 As, musing slow, I hail
 Thy genial, loved return! 20

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
 The fragrant Hours, and Elves
 Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brow with sedge, 25
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
 The pensive Pleasures sweet,
 Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells, 30
 Whose walls more awful nod
 By thy religious gleams.

APPENDIX.

Or if chill blustering winds or driving rain
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That from the mountain-side
Views wilds, and swelling floods, 35

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil. 40

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light !

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ; 45
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes :

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace, 50
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name !

— *W. Collins.*

3.—INTRODUCTION TO THE SEVENTH BOOK OF PARADISE LOST.

Descend from Heav'n, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning, not the name I call : for thou 5
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st, but Heav'nly born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleas'd

4.—SONNET.

With thy celestial song. Up led by thee,
 Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presum'd,
 An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
 Thy tempering ; with like safety guided down, 15
 Return me to my native element :
 Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
 Bellerophon, though from a lower clime)
 Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
 Erroneous there to wander and forlorn. 20
 Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
 Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
 Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
 To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days, 25
 On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues ;
 In darkness, and with dangers compass round,
 And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east : still govern thou my song, 30
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
 Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
 For thou art Heav'nly, she an empty dream.

—Milton.

4.—SONNET.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
 Stol'n on his wing my three-and-twentieth year !
 My hasting days fly on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth, 5
 That I to manhood am arrived so near,
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear
 That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th.
 Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,

APPENDIX.

It shall be still in strictest measure even 10
 To that same lot, however mean or high,
 Toward which time leads me, and the will of Heaven.
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,
 As ever in my great Task-master's eye. —Milton.

5.—TO CYRIACK SKINNER.

Cyriack, whose grandsire on the royal bench
 Of British Themis, with no mean applause,
 Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
 Which others at their bar so often wrench,
 To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench 5
 In mirth that after no repenting draws ;
 Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
 And what the Swede intend, and what the French.
 To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
 Toward solid good what leads the nearest way ; 10
 For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
 And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
 That with superfluous burden loads the day,
 And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains. —Milton.

6.—SONNET.

CXVI.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
 Admit impediments. Love is not love
 Which alters when it alteration finds,
 Or bends with the remover to remove :
 O no ! it is an ever-fixed mark 5
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken ;
 It is the star to every wandering bark,
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
 Within his bending sickle's compass come ; 10
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
 If this be error, and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved. —Shakespeare,

7.—A DROP OF DEW.

9

APPENDIX.

Such did the manna's sacred dew distil,
White and entire, although congealed and chill ;
Congealed on earth ; but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of the almighty sun. 40

—A. Marvell.

8.—TO ———

Look at the fate of summer flowers,
Which blow at daybreak, droop ere evensong ;
And, grieved for their brief date, confess that ours,
Measured by what we are and ought to be,
Measured by all that, trembling, we foresee, 5
Is not so long !

If human Life do pass away,
Perishing more swiftly than the flower,
If we are creatures of a *winter's* day ;
What space hath Virgin's beauty to disclose 10
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing rose ?
Not even an hour !

The deepest grove whose foliage hid
The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,
Could not the entrance of this thought forbid : 15
O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid !
Nor rate too high what must so quickly fade,
So soon be lost.

Then shall love teach some virtuous Youth
'To draw out of the object of his eyes,' 20
The while on thee they gaze in simple truth,
Hues more exalted, 'a refined form,'
That dreads not age, nor suffers from the worm,
And never dies.

—Wordsworth.

9.—TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

9.—TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL 1786.

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flower,
 Thou's met me in an evil hour ;
 For I maun crush amang the stoure
 Thy slender stem.
 To spare thee now is past my power,
 Thou bonnie gem. 5

Alas ! it's no thy neebor sweet,
 The bonnie Lark, companion meet,
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
 Wi' spreckled breast, 10
 When upward-springing, blithe, to greet
 The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
 Upon thy early, humble birth ;
 Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth 15
 Amid the storm,
 Scarce reared above the parent earth
 Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
 High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield, 20
 But thou, beneath the random bield
 O' clod or stane,
 Adorns the histie stibble-field,
 Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad, 25
 Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
 Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise ;
 But now the share uptears thy bed,
 And low thou lies ! 30

APPENDIX.

Such is the fate of artless Maid,
Sweet floweret of the rural shade !
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust ;
Till she, like thee, all soiled is laid
Low i' the dust. 35

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred !
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore, 40
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And overwhelm him o'er !

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven 45
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He, ruined, sink !

Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date ; 50
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom ;
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom !

—Burns.

10.—FROM "THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES."

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide :
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire ; 5
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain ;
No joys to him pacific scepters yield,—
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field ;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,

11.—ON THE EVE OF THE BATTLE OF QUATRE BRAS.

And one cāpitulate, and one resign : 10
 Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain ;
 “Think nothing gain’d,” he cries, “till naught remain,
 On Moscow’s walls till Gothic standards fly,
 And all be mine beneath the polar sky.”
 The march begins in military state, 15
 And nations on his eye suspended wait ;
 Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
 And Winter barricades the realms of Frost :
 He comes ; nor want nor cold his course delay ;—
 Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa’s day : 20
 The vanquish’d hero leaves his broken bands,
 And shows his miseries in distant lands ;
 Condemn’d a needy suppliant to wait,
 While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
 But did not Chance at length her error mend ? 25
 Did no subverted empire mark his end ?
 Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound ?
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground ?
 His fall was destin’d to a barren strand,
 A petty fortress, and a dubious hand. 30
 He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
 To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

—*Dr. Johnson.*

11.—ON THE EVE OF THE BATTLE OF QUATRE BRAS.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
 And Belgium’s capital had gathered then
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
 The lamps shone o’er fair women and brave men ;
 A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when 5
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
 Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
 And all went merry as a marriage-bell ;
 But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell.

Did ye not hear it ?—No ; ’twas but the wind, 10
 Or the car rattling o’er the stony street ;
 On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
 No sleep till morn when Youth and Pleasure meet

APPENDIX.

To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
 But hark ! that heavy sound breaks in once more, 15
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
 Arm ! arm ! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar !

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
 Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain : he did hear 20
 That sound the first amidst the festival,
 And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear ;
 And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
 His heart more truly knew that peal too well
 Which stretched his father on a bloody bier, 25
 And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell :
 He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago 30
 Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness ;
 And there were sudden partings, such as press
 The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated ; who could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes, 35
 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise ?

And there was mounting in hot haste : the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ; 40
 And the deep thunder, peal on peal, afar :
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;
 While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe ! they come ! they
 come !" 45

And wild and high the "Cameron's Gathering" rose !
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes :—
 How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,

12.—AFTER THE BATTLE.

Savage and shrill ! But with the breath which fills 50
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
 With the fierce native daring which instils
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ear !

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves, 55
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas !
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow 60
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, 65
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently-stern array !
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is covered thick with other clay, 70
 Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent ?

—Byron.

12.—AFTER THE BATTLE.

Night closed around the conqueror's way
 And lightnings showed the distant hill,
 Where those who lost that dreadful day
 Stood few and faint, but fearless still !
 The soldier's hope, the patriot's zeal, 5
 For ever dimmed, for ever crossed,—
 O who shall say what heroes feel
 When all but life and honour's lost ?

The last sad hour of freedom's dream,
 And valour's task, moved slowly by, 10
 While mute they watched, till morning's beam
 Should rise and give them light to die.

APPENDIX.

There's yet a world where souls are free,
Where tyrants taint not nature's bliss ;
If Death that world's bright opening be,
O who would live a slave in this ? 15

—*T. Moore.*

13.—THE POET IN WAR-TIME.

(FROM "THE BIGLOW PAPERS.")

Time wuz, the rhymes come crowdin' thick
Ez office-seekers arter 'lection,
An' into ary place 'ould stick
Without no bother nor objection ;
But sence the war my thoughts hang back 5
Ez though I wanted to enlist 'em ;
An' subs'tutes,—*they* don't never lack,
But then they'll slope afore you've mist 'em.

Nothin' don't seem like wut it wuz ;
I can't see wut there is to hender, 10
An' yit my brains jes' go buzz, buzz,
Like bumblebees agin a winder :
'Fore these times come, in all airth's row,
Ther' wuz one quiet place, my head in,
Where I could hide an' think,—but now 15
It's all one teeter, hopin', dreadin'.

Where's Peace? I start, some clear-blown night,
When gaunt stone walls grow numb an' number,
An', creakin' 'cross the snow-crus' white,
Walk the col' starlight into summer ; 20
Up grows the moon, an' swell by swell
Thru' the pale pasturs silvers dimmer
Than the last smile thet strives to tell
O' love gone heavenward in its shimmer.

I hev ben gladder o' sech things 25
Than cocks o' Spring or bees o' clover ;
They filled my heart with livin' springs,
But now they seem to freeze 'em over ;

13.—THE POET IN WAR-TIME.

Sights innercent ez babes on knee,
 Peaceful ez eyes o' pastur'd cattle, 30
 Jes' cos they be so, seem to me
 To rile me more with thoughts o' battle.

Indoors an' out by spells I try ;
 Ma'am Natur' keeps her spin-wheel goin',
 But leaves my natur' stiff and dry 35
 Ez fiels o' clover arter mowin';
 An' her jes' keepin' on the same,
 Calmer 'n a clock, and never carin',
 An' findin' nary thing to blame,
 Is wus than ef she took to swearin'. 40

Snow-flakes come whisperin' on the pane,—
 The charm makes blazin' logs so pleasant,—
 But I can't hark to wut they're say'n',
 With Grant or Sherman ollers present ;
 The chimbleys shudder in the gale, 45
 Thet lulls, then suddin takes to flappin'
 Like a shot hawk ; but all's ez stale
 To me ez so much sperit-rappin'.

Under the yaller-pines I house,
 When sunshine makes 'em all sweet-scented, 50
 An' hear among their furry boughs
 The baskin' west-wind purr contented,
 While 'way o'er head, ez sweet an' low
 Ez distant bells thet ring for meetin',
 The wedged wil' geese their bugles blow, 55
 Further an' further south retreatin'.

Or up the slippery knob I strain
 An' see a hundred hills like islans
 Lift their blue woods in broken chain
 Out o' the sea o' snowy silence ; 60
 The farm-smokes, sweetes' sight on airth,
 Slow thru the winter air a-shrinkin',
 Seem kin o' sad, an' roun' the hearth
 Of empty places set me thinkin'.

APPENDIX.

Beaver roars hoarse with meltin' snows, An' rattles di'mons from his granite : Time wuz, he snatched away my prose, An' into psalms or satires ran it ; But he, nor all the rest thet once Started my blood to country-dances, Can't set me goin' more 'n a dunce Thet hain't no use for dreams an' fancies.	65
Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street I hear the drummers makin' riot, An' I set thinkin' o' the feet Thet follered once, an' now are quiet,— White feet ez snowdrops innercent, Thet never knowed the paths o' Satan, Whose comin' step ther's ears thet won't, No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'.	75
Why, hain't I held 'em on my knee ? Didn't I love to see 'em growin', Three likely lads ez wal could be, Hahnsome an' brave an' not tu knowin' ? I set an' look into the blaze Whose natur', jes like theirn, keeps climbin', Ez long'z it lives, in shinin' ways, An' half despise myself for rhymin'.	80
Wut's words to them whose faith an' truth On War's red techstone rang true metal, Who ventur'd life an' love an' youth For the gret prize o' death in battle ? To him who, deadly hurt, agen Flashed on afore the charge's thunder, Tippin' with fire the bolt of men Thet rived the Rebel line asunder ?	85
T'ain't right to hev the young go fust, All throbbin' full o' gifts an' graces, Leavin' life's paupers dry es dust To try an' make b'lieve fill their places.	90
	95
	100

14.—EXTREME UNCTION.

Nothin' but tells us wut we miss,
 Ther's gaps our lives can't never fay in ;
 And *that* world seems so fur from this
 Lef' fur us loafers to grow gray in !

* * * *

Come, Peace ! not like a mourner bowed 105

For honour lost an' dear ones wasted,
 But proud, to meet a people proud,
 With eyes that tell o' triumph tasted !
 Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt,
 An' step that proves ye Victory's daughter ! 110
 Longin' for you, our sperits wilt
 Like shipwrecked men's on rafs for water.

Come, while our country feels the lift
 Of a gret instinct shoutin' forwards,
 An' knows *that* freedom ain't a gift 115
 That tarries long in hans o' cowards !
 Come, sech ez mothers prayed for, when
 They kissed their cross with lips that quivered,
 An' bring fair wages for brave men,—
 A nation saved, a race delivered ! 120

—J. R. Lowell.

14.—EXTREME UNCTION.

Go ! leave me, Priest ; my soul would be
 Alone with the consoler, Death ;
 Far sadder eyes than thine will see
 This crumbling clay yield up its breath ;
 These shrivelled hands have deeper stains 5
 Than holy oil can cleanse away,—
 Hands that have plucked the world's coarse gains
 As erst they plucked the flowers of May.

Call, if thou canst, to these gray eyes
 Some faith from youth's traditions wrung ; 10
 This fruitless husk which dustward dries
 Has been a heart once, has been young ;

APPENDIX.

On this bowed head the awful Past
 Once laid its consecrating hands ;
 The Future in its purpose vast 15
 Paused, waiting my supreme commands.

But look ! whose shadows block the door ?
 Who are those two that stand aloof ?
 See ! on my hands this freshening gore
 Writes o'er again its crimson proof ! 20
 My looked-for death-bed guests are met ;
 There my dead Youth doth wring its hands,
 And there, with eyes that goad me yet,
 The ghost of my Ideal stands !

God bends from out the deep and says,— 25
 “ I gave thee the great gift of life ;
 Wast thou not called in many ways ?
 Are not my earth and heaven at strife ?
 I gave thee of my seed to sow,
 Bringest thou me my hundred-fold ? ” 30
 Can I look up with face aglow,
 And answer, “ Father here is gold ? ”

I have been innocent ; God knows
 When first this wasted life began,
 Not grape with grape more kindly grows 35
 Than I with every brother-man :
 Now here I gasp ; what lose my kind,
 When this fast ebbing breath shall part ?
 What bands of love and service bind
 This being to the world's sad heart ? 40

Christ still was wandering o'er the earth
 Without a place to lay His head ;
 He found free welcome at my hearth,
 He shared my cup and broke my bread :
 Now, when I hear those steps sublime 45
 That bring the other world to this,
 My snake-turned nature, sunk in slime,
 Starts sideways with defiant hiss.

14.—EXTREME UNCTION.

Upon the hour when I was born, God said, "Another man shall be," And the great Maker did not scorn Out of himself to fashion me ; He sunned me with his ripening looks, And Heaven's rich instincts in me grew, As effortless as woodland nooks Send violets up and paint them blue.	50
Yes, I who now, with angry tears, Am exiled back to brutish clod, Have borne unquenched for fourscore years A spark of the eternal God : And to what end ? How yield I back The trust for such high uses given ? Heaven's light hath but revealed a track Whereby to crawl away from Heaven.	60
Men think it is an awful sight To see a soul just set adrift On that drear voyage from whose night The ominous shadows never lift ; But 'tis more awful to behold A helpless infant newly born, Whose little hands unconscious hold The keys of darkness and of morn.	65
Mine held them once ; I flung away Those keys that might have open set The golden sluices of the day, But clutch the keys of darkness yet ;— I hear the reapers singing go Into God's harvest ; I, that might With them have chosen, here below Grove shuddering at the gates of night.	70
O glorious Youth, that once wast mine ! O high Ideal ! all in vain Ye enter at this ruined shrine Whence worship ne'er shall rise again ;	75
	80

APPENDIX.

The bat and owl inhabit here, 85
The snake nests in the altar-stone,
The sacred vessels moulder near,
The image of the God is gone.

—*J. R. Lowell.*

15.—ALL SAINTS.

One feast, of holy days the crest,
I, though no Churchman, love to keep,
All-Saints,—the unknown good that rest
In God's still memory folded deep ; 5
The bravely dumb that did their deed,
And scorned to blot it with a name,
Men of the plain heroic breed,
That loved Heaven's silence more than fame.

Such lived not in the past alone,
But thread to-day the unheeding street, 10
And stairs to Sin and Famine known
Sing with the welcome of their feet ;
The den they enter grows a shrine,
The grimy sash an oriel burns,
Their cup of water warms like wine, 15
Their speech is filled from heavenly urns.

About their brows to me appears
An aureole traced in tenderest light,
The rainbow-gleam of smiles through tears
In dying eyes, by them made bright, 20
Of souls that shivered on the edge
Of that chill ford repassed no more,
And in their mercy felt the pledge
And sweetness of the farther shore.

—*J. R. Lowell.*

16.—SONNET.

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which to the open sea
Of the world's praise from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"

18.—SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

Roused though it be full often to a mood 5
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
 That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish ; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible knights of old : 10
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakespeare spake ; the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

—Wordsworth.

17.—SONNET.

MUTABILITY.

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
 And sink from high to low, along a scale
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail :
 A musical but melancholy chime
 Which they can hear who meddle not with crime, 5
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not ; but her outward forms that bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain
 And is no more ; drop like the tower sublime 10
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

—Wordsworth.

18.—SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

I.

I held it truth, with him who sings
 To one clear harp in divers tones,
 That men may rise on stepping-stones
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

APPENDIX.

But who shall so forecast the years 5
 And find in loss a gain to match ?
 Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
 The far-off interest of tears ?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,
 Let darkness keep her raven gloss : 10
 Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
 To dance with death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
 The long result of love, and boast,
 ' Behold the man that loved and lost, 15
 But all he was is overworn.'

XXVII.

I envy not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes 5
 His license in the field of time,
 Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
 To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
 The heart that never plighted troth 10
 But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;
 Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;
 I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
 'Tis better to have loved and lost 15
 Than never to have loved at all.

LIV.

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
 Will be the final goal of ill,
 To pangs of nature, sins of will,
 Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

18.—SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

- That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
 That not one life shall be destroy'd,
 Or cast as rubbish to the void,
 When God hath made the pile complete ; 5
- That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
 That not a moth with vain desire
 Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
 Or but subserves another's gain. 10
- Behold, we know not anything ;
 I can but trust that good shall fall
 At last—far off—at last, to all,
 And every winter change to spring. 15
- So runs my dream : but what am I ?
 An infant crying in the night :
 An infant crying for the light :
 And with no language but a cry. 20

LXXVI.

- Take wings of fancy, and ascend,
 And in a moment set thy face
 Where all the starry heavens of space
 Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;
- Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'
 The secular abyss to come,
 And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
 Before the mouldering of a yew ; 5
- And if the matin songs, that woke
 The darkness of our planet, last,
 Thine own shall wither in the vast,
 Ere half the lifetime of an oak. 10
- Ere these have clothed their branchy bowers
 With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain ;
 And what are they when these remain
 The ruin'd shells of hollow towers ? 15

APPENDIX.

LXXXVI.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
 That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
 Of evening over brake and bloom
 And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below 5
 Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,
 And shadowing down the horned flood
 In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh 10
 The full new life that feeds thy breath
 Throughout my frame, till Doubt and Death,
 Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
 On leagues of odour streaming far,
 To where in yonder orient star 15
 A hundred spirits whisper 'Peace.'

CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail
 Against her beauty? May she mix
 With men and prosper! Who shall fix
 Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire : 5
 She sets her forward countenance
 And leaps into the future chance,
 Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain— 10
 She cannot fight the fear of death.
 What is she, cut from love and faith,
 But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst
 All barriers in her onward race
 For power. Let her know her place ; 15
 She is the second, not the first.

18.—SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain ; and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child : 20

For she is earthly of the mind,
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
O, friend, who camest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee, 25
Who grewest not alone in power
And knowledge, but by year and hour
In reverence and in charity.

CXXXI.

O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust 5
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquer'd years
To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved 10
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

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